Senators expose US lobby group directing RP policies

Story on PAGE A2

Palace tells Meralco to slash PPA charges

By Carlito Pablo
and Ronnel W. Domingo

MALACAÑANG yesterday called on Manila Electric Co. to reduce its purchased power adjustment (PPA) charges to provide relief to consumers burdened by high electricity rates.

Romulo Neri, secretary general of the

PALACE/ A20

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **S. Korea subway inferno kills 134** WORLD /A12
- **RP seeks US help on FATF sanctions** NEWS /A4
- **NPA admits killing cop** NEWS /A6

email: feedback@inqu[illegible]
Wednesday, February 19, 2003 ★★ 68 pages / 8 sections / vol. 18 / no. 73 P15
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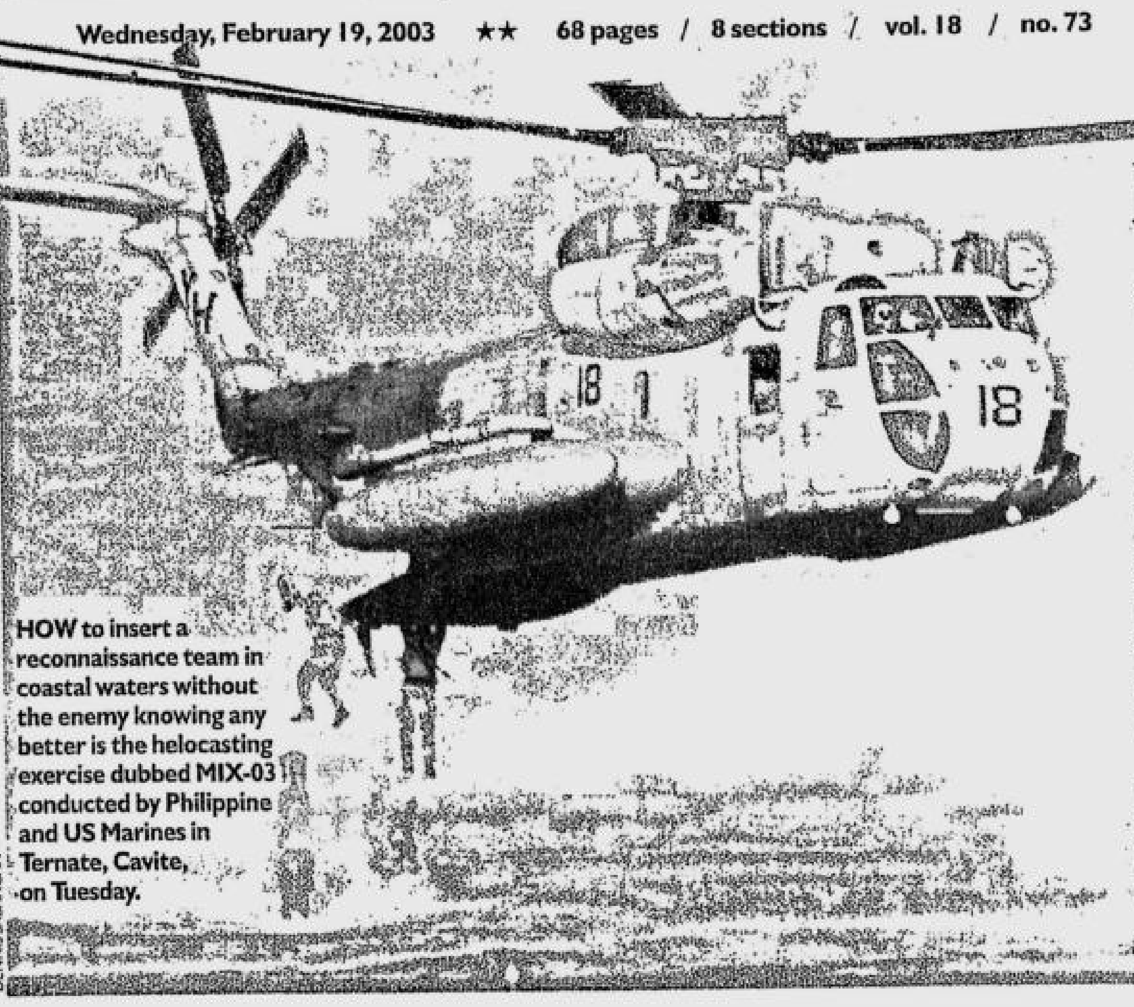
North Korea threatens to pull out of armistice pact

SEOUL—North Korea threatened on Tuesday to pull out of the 1953 armistice that ended the Korean War, accusing the United States of planning a naval blockade to prepare for a preemptive attack.

The 1950-53 Korean War ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty, leaving the peninsula still technically in a state of war. The frontier is the world's most heavily armed with most of the nearly 2 million troops of both sides deployed near the border, including 37,000 Americans stationed in South Korea.

A spokesperson of the North's Korean People's Army said "the situation on the Korean Peninsula is getting extremely tense" because of alleged US plans to send in reinforcements and build a naval blockade to prepare for a preemptive attack.

NORTH/ A19



HOW to insert a reconnaissance team in coastal waters without the enemy knowing any better is the helocasting exercise dubbed MIX-03 conducted by Philippine and US Marines in Ternate, Cavite, on Tuesday.

DENNIS SABANGAN

MILF launches counterattacks; 16 soldiers dead

By Jeffrey Tupas
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PIKIT, North Cotabato—Moro rebels counterattacked in at least four towns in two Central Mindanao provinces yesterday, killing 16 government soldiers and wounding 15 others.

"If you're asking if it was us who perpetrated it, yes, it was the MILF," Moro Islamic Liberation Front spokesperson Eid Kabalu told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

The first attack was in Central Langkung in Matanog town, Maguindanao, shortly after midnight, leaving a soldier dead and another wounded.

At 3 a.m., MILF rebels attacked an Army command post in Upper Salbu in Shariff Aguak, also in Maguindanao. Five soldiers were killed while three others were wounded.

About two hours later, three soldiers were killed while an undetermined number was wounded when rebels attacked the 26th In-

MILF/ A19

GIs in Jolo 'provocative'

SolGen upholds Nani probe

By Michael Lim Ubac

DESPITE the resignation of Justice Secretary Hernando Perez last month, the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) has asked the appellate court to uphold the investigation being conducted by the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC).

During oral arguments on Friday, PAGC Chair Dario Rama himself admitted to the Court of Appeals Fifth Division that the temporary restraining order was already mooted because his office had already resolved the Perez case.

SOLGEN/ A7

Pro-Danding Lakas solons face sanction

By Carlito Pablo
and Juliet Javellana

THE LAKAS-Christian Muslim Democrats has threatened to impose sanctions on 50 Lakas congressmen who are endorsing businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco as the ruling party's candidate for next year's presidential election.

But a Lakas stalwart warned

PRO-DANDING/ A20

"SNIPERS" are draped with cogon during the joint US-RP Marine Interoperability Exercise 2003 which will last for four weeks and is participated in by more than 1,300 troops in Ternate, Cavite.

DENNIS SABANGAN

Not since colonial era were US troops there

WARNINGS were raised yesterday that the planned deployment of US soldiers in Sulu under Balikatan 03-1 would provoke more tension in a province already wracked by poverty and violence.

The presence of US troops—last in Jolo during the American colonial period when they mounted a brutal pacification campaign against the rebellious Muslim minority between 1899 and 1913—"will bring more trouble," Agence France Presse yesterday quoted Limson Wahab, dean of the Sulu State College in Jolo, as saying.

Maradeka, an alliance of Muslim organizations advocating peace and democracy, said: "This is an act of war on the people of Sulu. They were never consulted on this."

Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the Senate's legislative oversight committee on the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement, said that while he saw the rationale behind the choice of Sulu as the venue for the joint military exercise, he was wary that its timing might raise tensions in the predominantly Muslim region in the context of US plans for an attack on Iraq.

"We must assume that there is

GIs/ A19

US, Britain still push for war resolution

UNITED NATIONS—Despite stiff opposition in the Security Council, the United States and Britain are still pressing ahead this week with a new resolution seeking authorization to use military force to disarm Iraq.

US-British war plans were given a boost on Monday when European Union leaders delivered their first joint warning to Iraq that force could be used as a last resort, but they remained split on the key issue of how much time to give Baghdad.

In a fresh bid to avert a US-led attack, however, Iraq has finally allowed an American U-2 to fly over its territory in support of UN inspectors hunting for evidence of banned weapons of mass destruction.

US Ambassador John Negroponte and British Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock met Monday afternoon to discuss the content and timing of a second resolution, which diplomats say will likely be circulated late Wednesday after a two-day open debate on Iraq in the Security Council.

The United States and Britain face an uphill struggle in the Security Council following last Friday's modestly upbeat reports from top weapons inspectors and calls from the overwhelming majority of council members led by France for inspections to continue.

Buoyed by weekend demonstrations around the world that attracted millions of people, the anti-war forces are likely to get another

US/ A7

AUG. 2, 2002: NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco points an accusing finger at Landbank cashier Acsa Ramirez in the presence of President Macapagal.

PDI PHOTO

Ombudsman clears Acsa, junks NBI case

By Philip C. Tubeza
and Volt Contreras

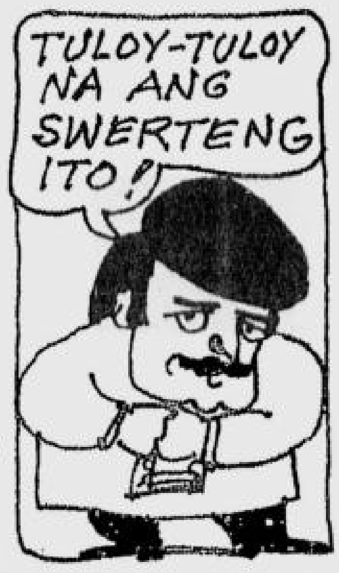
THERE is still justice in this country.

Or so thinks Acsa Ramirez, who in July 2002 blew the whistle on a dirty-money scam but whom National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco presented as a suspect in a press conference attended by President Macapagal-Arroyo. Along with two others, she was subsequently charged with violation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001.

The Office of the Ombudsman has cleared Ramirez, a cashier of the Land Bank of the Philippines (Binangonan branch), of liability in the P431-million tax diversion scam that she had helped expose.

In a resolution approved Feb. 13 by Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio, a six-member investigating panel ab-

OMBUDSMAN/ A7



TULOY-TULOY NA ANG SWERTENG ITO?!

Erap wins case vs 'jeep' driver

By Volt Contreras
and Michael Lim Ubac

IT WAS almost enough, he said, to restore his faith in the country's courts.

Deposed President Joseph Estrada won a court case on Valentine's Day—but one that had nothing to do with the plunder charges he is facing.

ERAP/ A20

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. Luzon will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/19/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Senators denounce lobby group

By Cynthia D. Balana

IS the Philippines a colony of the United States all over again?

Some senators believe so after they revealed that a US-funded lobby group has supposedly been directing Philippine policy-making through "moles" planted in all layers of the government.

The lobby group, based in Maryland, is the Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI). The group has reportedly teamed up with a local firm, Accelerating Growth Investment and Liberalization with Equity (Agile), whose influence allegedly permeates the Philippine government.

Sen. Ralph Recto said DAI had received a $41.2-million six-year grant from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) for its lobbying efforts.

Recto said DAI has been unabashedly pushing for pro-US policies in the country, while Agile is implementing the "entire economic policy and governance portfolio" of the USAID mission in Manila.

"You can say the genesis of recently passed Philippine laws could be traced to that state (Maryland)," he said.

In a privilege speech, Sen. Sergio Osmeña III questioned Agile's activities in the country.

Osmeña said Agile, which has its main office at the Strata Building in Ortigas, Mandaluyong City, has established satellite offices in key government agencies since 1998.

These include the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the Departments of Finance, Budget and Management, Justice and Agriculture, the Securities and Exchange Commission, Civil Aeronautics Board and the National Telecommunications Commission.

"They practically brag that they are directing, subverting and influencing Philippine policies," Osmeña said of Agile.

These policies, he said, are then presented to Congress as having come from the different departments of the government.

Recto said Agile agents were also in Malacañang, ensconced in the office of at least one presidential adviser whom he did not name.

He said Agile's concerns include "genetically modified foods, intellectual property rights, radio frequencies, shipping, the reorganization of the Bureau of International Revenue, rice importation, capital markets, e-commerce and open skies."

According to reports, Agile may also have been responsible for sending an advance copy of the amendments to the Anti-Money Laundering Act (Amla) to the Financial Action Task Force in Paris, which rejected the amendments because they did not meet international standards.

Sen. John Osmeña said DAI may have been able to establish a presence here through the foreign-assisted loans and grants given to government departments and agencies.

"When we were talking about the GATT here many years ago, Agile was already here. They were monitoring us. They gave position papers, sat with our officials who consulted them and pushed for the passage of their own laws. The question is: Why did the government allow them to penetrate us?" Osmeña asked.

He said that even the Supreme Court received a P306-million grant in 2001 for the Judicial Reform Project.

Sen. Manny Villar said Agile representatives were present at congressional hearings and gave reports and recommendations to congressmen when he was speaker of the House.

"I also observed that all the Agile-initiated bills were the ones that got prioritized in Congress. That's how powerful this lobby group is," Villar said.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said officials of DAI, Agile, the Bangko Sentral and the Department of Finance have been invited to today's "Question Hour" before the Senate committee of the whole.

They have been asked to clarify reports that they had tried to sabotage the Amla, which prompted the FATF to reject the amendments ratified by Congress.

Agile 'agents' tagged in plot to kill BIR

By Christine O. Avendaño

SOUTHERN Leyte Rep. Aniceto Saludo yesterday charged that there was a conspiracy to railroad a bill that sought to restructure the Bureau of Internal Revenue, and pointed to Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho and Negros Occidental Rep. Julio Ledesma IV as among the conspirators.

Pulling the strings, he said, is the same Agile group being denounced in the Senate as having spies posted in key areas of the bureaucracy. *(See related story.)*

In a privilege speech, Saludo lambasted the bill that would replace the BIR with the National Authority for Revenue Administration (Nara). The bill was recently approved by the House committee on ways and means chaired by Ledesma.

The ultimate aim of the conspiracy was to privatize revenue collections, and thus surrender fiscal authority to the private sector, "both foreign and domestic," Saludo charged.

He said the plot was being propelled by "criminal entities poised to cripple the BIR through highly-financed lobby, advocacy, and policy reform initiatives."

The Nara bill was unconstitutional, Saludo told the INQUIRER, because the tax collection agency was among three government entities protected by law against privatization. The other two are the national defense and justice departments.

'Web of deception'

Saludo added that Camacho was "on top of this web of deception, fraud and corruption," being the "de facto coordinator of a multimillion public relations offensive and civil society campaign designed to bludgeon" Congress into passing the Nara act and even the amendments to the Anti-Money Laundering law.

Among the group's media operatives, the solon said, were University of the Philippines professor Alex Magno and Malacañang press relations handler Maui Terrado.

Saludo identified former BIR chief Rene Bañez as another conspirator, and said the current wave of anti-BIR stories were part of the plot.

He accused the Agile group, said to be funded by the US Agency for International Development, as being behind the whole restructure scheme.

Earlier, the Leyte solon led several congressmen in filing a graft case against Bañez for allegedly making decisions during his term at the BIR that benefited his (Bañez's) former employers, the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.-Smart-Metro Pacific conglomerate owned by the Salim family.

Saludo said Ledesma's ways and means committee held no jurisdiction over the Nara bill, which concerned a reorganization bid, and had nothing to do with raising revenues.

Nara should be discussed by the committee on government reorganization headed by Rizal Rep. Vince Sumulong, Saludo said.

Aside from the "arbitrary and questionable assignment" of the bill to the wrong committee, he disclosed, "virtually every trick in parliament procedure" had been resorted to in a bid to railroad it.

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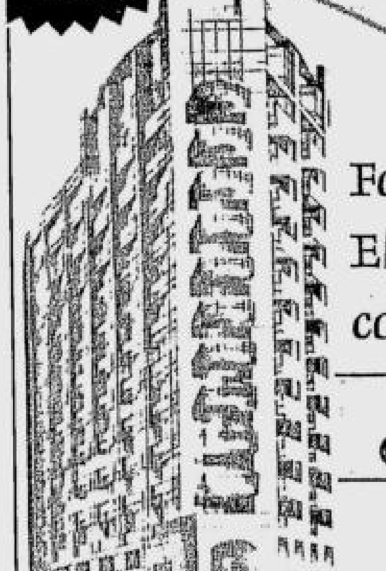

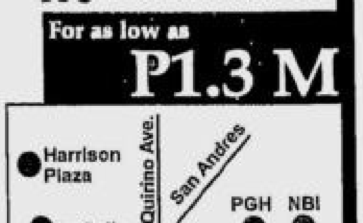

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Not too late to disarm, Joe de V tells Saddam

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

"THE HOUR is late, Mr. President. But if you act now, there is still time."

With these words and more, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. appealed in a letter to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to "now truly and fully disarm" to avoid war.

In the three-page missive sent through diplomatic channels, De Venecia urged Saddam to make a "strategic accommodation" to spare his people the "agonies of a devastating technological war."

"Perhaps you might now wish, Mr. President, to take the initiative and invite the UN secretary general, the UN inspectors, representatives of the US and the UK and international media and show them yourself the mobile chemical stations and underground facilities that they believe are in Iraq, and for Iraq to now truly and fully disarm," De Venecia told Saddam.

De Venecia said Saddam's enemies might interpret this as surrender, "but Iraq's friends, the Arabs in the region and the people of the world will recognize it as an act of the highest statesmanship that will avoid war, save tens of thousands of lives, lead Iraq and its people to peace and prosperity and perpetuate your name in the history of our times."

De Venecia recalled the "courteous reception" the Iraqi leader accorded him in his hometown of Tikrit in April 1996 when he went to Iraq on invitation of Speaker Sadoon Hammadi of the Iraqi Parliament.

He said that three weeks ago, Iraqi Parliament Vice Chair Ajeel Ismael invited Cambodian Speaker of Parliament Prince Norodom Ranariddh and himself to fly to Baghdad but he was unable to do so because he fell sick.

De Venecia told Saddam that a "great future" awaited him and his people beyond the current crisis if he chose peace. He also lauded Saddam's leadership and the resilience of the Iraqi people.

"I suggest Mr. President that, beyond a strategic accommodation with the UN and the American demands, there is a great future for an open and pluralist Iraq under your continuing leadership," he said.

"In domestic politics, you could begin to award meaningful representation to the Kurds, Shiites and Sunni communities and the political opposition through the mechanism of a government of national unity whose fulcrum would continue to be the Baathist Party," De Venecia said.

Naredo, 89

WORLD War II veteran Ulpiano Naredo died of old age after a lingering illness at the Regional Medical Center of San Juan in California on Feb. 14. He would have turned 89 on April 3.

A native of Agno, Pangasinan, he once worked as a teacher of practical arts before the outbreak of the war more than 50 years ago.

Before he went to the US in 1996, he was fond of saying that the US government should give full benefits to the Philippine veterans as "a perfect souvenir" for them.

Ironically, his first wife Rosalina, also a teacher he met in Iloilo, died also on Feb. 14 in 1973.

He is survived by his children by his first wife, Edith Naredo, Barbara Mae Dacanay, Manila bureau chief of Gulf News, his second wife Perfecta and their children Evangelina and Olive Joy, and sons-in-law, Alex Dacanay, formerly with Nihon Keizai Shimbun and Tepo Jaakolla, a Finnish national.

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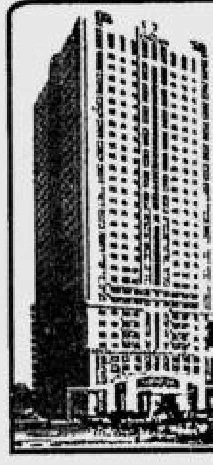

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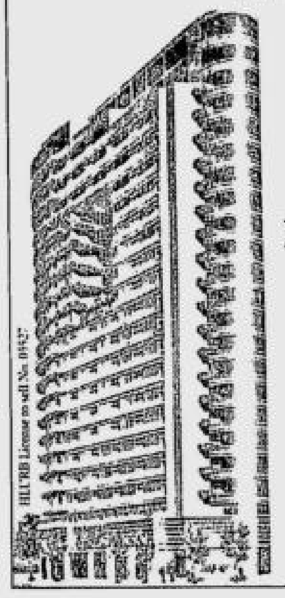

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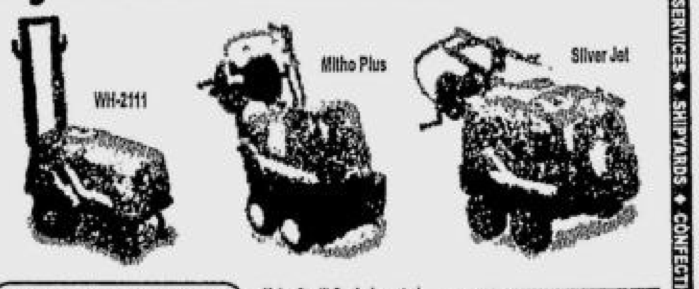

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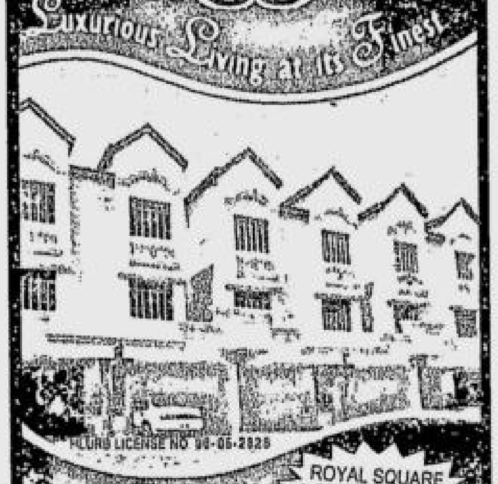

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EXERCISE OF MORAL SUASION

RP seeks US help on FATF sanctions

THE PHILIPPINES has asked the United States for help in holding off looming international sanctions against the country for failure to bolster its anti money-laundering regime, even as Congress yesterday moved to reconsider amendments to the Anti-Money Laundering Law that had been found inadequate.

"The government has sought the assistance of the United States to exercise its moral suasion on FATF members to hold adverse actions directed against the Philippines," Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said.

Vice President Teofisto Guingona also called for diplomatic efforts to stop what he called were premature sanctions on Philippine transactions in foreign banks.

But US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone has told the country's finance officials that Washington could not commit to convincing other Financial Action Task Force members to accept the amendments to the Amla that Congress passed last week.

The Paris-based FATF decided Friday to recommend additional counter-measures against the Philippines starting March 15 because of the country's perceived failure to plug loopholes in the Amla that it passed in 2001.

Congress last week beat a Feb. 12 deadline to pass amendments, but the FATF, set up by the leading industrialized countries, said the new measures failed to address "previously identified deficiencies" in the law.

Speaker Jose de Venecia said the House had yesterday decided to reconsider the bicameral conference committee report on the Amla amendments that both congressional chambers had ratified on Feb. 13. He said the Senate was expected to do the same.

Bicameral conference

This would pave the way for reconstituting the bicameral conference committee to approve new amendments before the new March 15 deadline given by the FATF, De Venecia said.

This simultaneous move by the two chambers had been agreed in a meeting late Monday between President Macapagal-Arroyo and congressional leaders which included De Venecia, Senate President Franklin Drilon, Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez, Manila Rep. Jaime Lopez and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr.

"We're hoping senators would adhere to the House version as this was satisfactory to US officials," De Venecia said.

The Speaker said that he had asked the government to invite FATF leaders to come to Manila this week to "thresh out the provisions in the bicameral conference committee report they are objecting to so we can zero in (on them)."

Bunye said the President would "continue to work with Congress in finding a solution to this problem," and chided legislators for coming up short.

"It should be obvious by now that the problem will not only affect (overseas Filipino workers) but even our entire economy as well," Bunye said.

"We are now suffering the effects of the anticipated imposition of FATF sanctions. We are afraid that things could get worse once the actual sanctions are imposed," he said.

Drilon said on Monday that Japan, an FATF member, was making it more difficult for Filipino workers there to transfer money to Philippine banks.

He reported that Japanese postal authorities had rejected a Philippine National Bank application last month to set up a remittance system for the estimated 186,316 Filipinos living in Japan.

Lopez, chair of the House committee on banks, also revealed that aside from Japan's rejection of the PNB bid, Japanese authorities also did not allow the Land Bank of the Philippines to operate in Japan.

The reason given was that Landbank was not fully licensed to do transactions in Japan, but Lopez thought otherwise.

"These are the first concrete signals of the counter-measures that the FATF has warned us about," he said.

Representatives Florencio Abad, Imee Marcos and Monico Puentevella urged their Senate colleagues not to delay anymore the passage of an FATF-compliant Amla.

Lawmakers

Abad said the attitude of lawmakers should be "reoriented in a way that we should think that we have to do this because this is good for us."

"In a globalized setting, we are dependent on exports and remittances and can't avoid to play the rules set up by those setting up the standards," he said.

Marcos said she was aghast that the House should choose on Monday to open floor deliberations on a resolution seeking to change the 1987 Constitution than move to amend the Amla.

Puentevella appealed to the "statesmanship" of senators in helping pass a new law. *Dona Pazzibugan and Christine Avendaño, with reports from Norman Bordadora and Gerald A. Lacuarta*

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HK maids to hold new protest

HONG KONG—Thousands of foreign workers are planning to stage another mass rally in protest of a Hong Kong government plan to impose a new tax on domestic helpers, a spokesperson for the Asian Migrant Coordinating Body (AMCB) said Tuesday.

"We will hold another protest march against the new levy on foreign domestic helpers on Sunday with some 5,000 people participating," Connie Bragas-Regalado said, as she led a small demonstration outside government headquarters here.

Regalado said Philippine Foreign Secretary Blas Ople told the AMBC that Hong Kong chief executive Tung Chee-hwa had expressed his strong commitment to the tax during a meeting between the two last week.

Regalado said the latest proposal is to levy employers HK$9,600 ($1,232) on every standard two-year contract for domestic helpers. The amount of HK$400 would then be deducted from the maids' HK$3,270 minimum monthly salary.

"We are worried that such a levy would stop employers from hiring or renewing the contracts of foreign domestic helpers," Regalado said.

"It will leave a lot of foreign domestic helpers without work," she added.

Majority of the 240,000 foreign domestic helpers in Hong Kong are from the Philippines, with Indonesia and Thailand contributing significant numbers. *AFP*

MedDERM ASIA salutes world renowned dermatologists

MedDerm ASIA, a leading Dermatological Centre that advocates the scientific approach to professional skin treatment, took time out to fete their world-renowned colleagues in the field of Dermatology. This group of international medical practitioners play a significant role in the operations of MedDerm ASIA: they act as the Centre's research partners and medical advisers as it continually seeks for the latest and most effective methods of skin care management.

MedDerm ASIA located at Wilson Street, Greenhills, San Juan, holds the distinction of being the first of its kind to focus on and offer relevant medical expertise in the treatment and care of the skin. Its doctors are highly respected Fellows of the American Academy of Dermatology and the Phil. Dermatologic Society, aside from holding various professional degrees and titles from other institutions here and abroad.

Honored at the cocktail party were Dr. Mitchel P. Goldman of California, Prof. Goh Chee Leok of Singapore, Dr. Joyce Lim of Singapore, Dr. Jean-Claude Bystryn of New York, Dr. Kimberly Butterwick of California and Dr. Niwat Polnikorn of Thailand.

From left to right - Drs. Benjamin B. Bince (MedDerm ASIA, Head, Education & Research Division), Nancy Garcia-Tan (MedDerm ASIA, Medical Director), Niwat Palnikorn, Mitchel P. Goldman, Kimberly Butterwick, Joyce Lim, Rosalina E. Nadela (MedDerm ASIA, Head, Medical Dermatology Division), Prof. Goh Chee Leok

Dr. Mitchel P. Goldman

Associate Clinical Professor in Dermatology, University of California, San Diego Medical Center / Medical Director of Laser and Skin Surgery Center of La Jolla, California / Received the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery "20th Century Award" for Outstanding Contribution to Cosmetic Surgery in the 20th century.

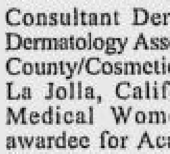
Done multiple Research work, written several book chapters & Publications, and given several lectures & workshops specially on Leg vein treatment and Lasers.

Dr. Joyce Lim

Consultant Dermatologist in Private Practice at the Joyce Lim Skin and Laser Clinic / Visiting Consultant at the National Skin Center, Singapore / Past President of the Dermatological Society of Singapore (1996-2000)

Prof. Goh Chee Leok

Senior Consultant and Medical Director of the National Skin Center, Singapore / Senior Clinical Teacher/Lecturer: Dermato-Venereology, Faculty of Medicine National University of Singapore. He has held several Professional and Academic bodies. He is a member of the editorial board of several journals and has written several textbooks and 235 scientific publications in local and international peer review journals in dermatology and venereology.



Dr. Kimberly Butterwick

Clinical Faculty, Department of Medicine at Scripps Mercy Hospital, San Diego, California / Consultant Dermatologist at the Dermatology Associates of San Diego County/Cosmetic Laser Associates, La Jolla, California / American Medical Women's Association awardee for Academic Excellence and has given several Academic presentations, workshops, publications specially on Photoaging, Liposuction & Fat transplant

Dr. Jean-Claude Bystryn

He is a professor in the Department of Dermatology, New York University School of Medicine. He is also the director of the Melanoma Program of the Kaplan Cancer Center of the New York University.

Dr. Bystryn has published numerous papers on melanoma vaccine and blistering disorders. He is a highly respected Dermatologist in his field of expertise all over the world.

Dr. Niwat Polnikorn

President of the Thai Society of Cosmetic Dermatology and Surgery / Chief, Dermatologic Surgery Unit; Division of Dermatology, Faculty of medicine, Ramathibodi Hospital / Head, Ramahibodi International Training Center for Cutaneous Laser Surgery, Mahidol University / Multiple publications and authored textbooks specially on Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Laser Therapy.

◆

On February 22 , Saturday , MedDerm ASIA will hold its first medical forum to coincide with their first anniversary, at the Forum, 3rd level, The Podium, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center to discuss relevant and latest issues on skin care to be attended by select clients and friends. This will be the first of a series of medical dialogues to keep its clients well informed and updated in the area of skin care management.

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New PNP reshuffle looms

A RESHUFFLE in the Philippine National Police looms in view of the retirement of some police officials, including Deputy Director General Clyde Fernandez and Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, in the next five weeks.

Fernandez, current deputy chief for administration (DCA), and Berroya, director for the Civil Security Group, are set to retire on Apr. 1 and Mar. 11, respectively, when they reach the mandatory retirement age of 56.

"There will be minor changes," Director Ricardo de Leon, director for police community relations, told reporters in an interview.

The choices for Fernandez's replacement in the PNP's no. 2 slot would be limited to Deputy Director Generals Edgar Aglipay, deputy chief for operations; Virtus Gil, chief of the Directorial Staff; and Reynaldo Velasco, National Capital Region Police Office chief, De Leon said, these officials being three-star generals.

All three are graduates of the Philippine Military Academy, Class '71.

Deputy Director General Florencio Fianza, executive director of the Philippine Center on Transnational Crimes, also a three-star general, was out of the running because he was retiring in October, De Leon added.

The next DCA is perceived to have the edge over everybody else in landing the top post when PNP chief Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. retires in December 2004. *TJ Burgonio*

IRAQ AND TERROR IN RP

Bomber's cell phone linked to Iraqi envoy

A CELL phone used by a member of the Abu Sayyaf extremist group to call an Iraqi diplomat was later employed in a failed attempt to trigger a bomb, according to a confidential intelligence report.

Iraqi Consul Husham Hussain was expelled last week after the report claimed he received a call from an Abu Sayyaf member on Oct. 3, 2002, a day after a bomb in Zamboanga City killed a US soldier and two other people.

The caller was not identified. The Iraqi Embassy denied any links to dissident groups, including the Abu Sayyaf, which is on a US list of foreign terrorist organizations and has been loosely linked to al-Qaida.

Six days after the contact was made, the caller's cell phone was used to try to set off another bomb in Zamboanga's San Roque district, near the military's Southern Command headquarters, but it failed to go off, according to the intelligence report, obtained by The Associated Press.

The bomb and the cell phone were later recovered by police, a security official said. The cell phone listed contacts for Hamsiraji Sali, one of five Abu Sayyaf leaders on a US wanted list.

Sali, believed to be hiding on southern Basilan island, has threatened to launch terror attacks in Manila and other cities if the United States attacks Iraq, the intelligence report said.

Intelligence reports linking Hussain to the Abu Sayyaf were discussed in a Cabinet committee dealing with security a few weeks ago. According to the security official, officials expressed concern that Iraq could somehow retaliate if Hussain were expelled, but other officials disagreed, citing the 1991 expulsion of another Iraqi diplomat.

That year, the Philippines kicked out then Iraqi Charge d'Affaires Muwafak al-Ani after an Iraqi man was killed and another wounded in the premature detonation of a bomb believed intended for the US cultural center in Makati. Al-Ani is said to be Iraq's current ambassador to China.

Last week, Foreign Secretary Blas Ople confronted Iraqi Charge d'Affaires Samir A-Masih Bolus with the intelligence report linking Hussain to the Abu Sayyaf. But the government has not offered evidence beyond the phone call, and said more detailed information could not be released because the sources could be compromised.

Before he left the country last Thursday, Hussain denied any wrongdoing. In Baghdad, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson labeled Manila's decision to expel Hussain as part of an extensive US propaganda campaign "in order to distort the position of Iraq and to fabricate false evidence by which the US administration could justify its colonial and Zionist campaign against Iraq."

The intelligence report said other Iraqi diplomats in the country were being monitored.

In a telephone conversation last week with President Macapagal-Arroyo, US President George W. Bush expressed concern over "the direct terrorist link" of the Iraqi Embassy here, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said. The US Embassy also expressed concern, saying the intelligence revelations were "very disturbing but hardly surprising." *AP*

HUSSAIN: Expelled

PRIETO: Black and blue after the bar brawl

American investor faces deportation for undesirability

By Armand N. Nocum

AN AMERICAN investor in Subic is facing possible deportation after a mauling incident involving a Filipino brought to light his probable violation of Philippine immigration laws.

Curtis Perry, president of an airplane repair and consultancy firm at Subic, was charged with being an undesirable alien by Eduardo M. Prieto, a Filipino who lives at the former US base, after the American beat him severely outside a Subic bar on Dec. 17, 2002. This was aside from the criminal complaint Prieto filed against Perry with the Olongapo City prosecutor.

The Bureau of Immigration found that Perry may have violated conditions of his Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR).

"When somebody charges somebody with undesirability, we automatically conduct a records check. The check [showed] that Mr. Perry also had a Subic investor's visa, but there was a certification that he had not been reporting (to the BI) annually," said Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo.

Domingo said investor's visa holders are required under the law to report to the BI every year. She said they are reviewing the Alien Registration Act to see if there are exemptions to the law.

"If [his appearance] is not required, then he cannot be deported," she said. "But if there is no exemption, then there is a violation."

Perry was summoned to the BI for a hearing on the case of "undesirability" filed by Prieto.

Prieto's complaint stemmed from the criminal charge he filed against Perry for the mauling outside the Vascos Nautical Pub in the Subic Freeport Zone.

In his complaint, Prieto said Perry "had a long history of violence against Filipinos. His presence in this country is inimical to the welfare and safety of Filipino citizens."

He said the BI had all the more reason to deport Perry since he is facing an "attempted homicide" charge filed before the Olongapo City prosecutor by Prieto himself.

Prieto refused to talk to reporters after the hearing, however, but Perry did. He denied having any fights with Filipinos in the past.

"This is not good for the foreign companies, the businesses at Subic; not good for myself and my family," said Perry, who is also connected to the Brent School at Subic.

In his complaint, Prieto described the incident with Perry.

He said that upon his arrival at the bar at around 11 p.m., Perry made a snide remark as he passed by the American's table.

Prieto said Perry was telling his table companions that the board of trustees at Brent were having problems with Prieto's wife, who taught at the school.

On his way to the toilet later, Prieto said he passed by Perry's table again and was invited by the latter to "talk outside."

"Upon reaching the parking lot, Perry treacherously and without warning forcefully shoved me, then punched me in the forehead," he wrote in his complaint.

Prieto said he received a flurry of blows from Perry, until the American was restrained by a companion. *With Christian V. Esguerra*

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REVOLUTIONARY JUSTICE

NPA owns cop chief's killing

LUCENA CITY—The communist New People's Army has claimed responsibility for the ambush killing on Feb. 14 of Supt. Eriberto Paglinawan, the police chief of Cabuyao, Laguna.

A "special operations group" of the communist guerrilla unit enforced the sentence of capital punishment on Paglinawan, according to an e-mail message from Tirso "Ka Bart" Alcantara, a spokesperson of the NPA's Melito Glor command.

The statement, dated Feb. 14, was sent to the INQUIRER by a staff member of the Kalatas-Southern Tagalog, a journal published by the communist rebels in the region.

However, a media liaison of the Communist Party of the Philippines declined to confirm the veracity of Alcantara's statement.

In his e-mail statement, Alcantara said Paglinawan was given the death sentence for his alleged criminal acts against the striking Nestlé Phil. workers in Cabuyao last year.

He said Paglinawan was responsible for busting the picket line of striking Nestlé workers in three separate incidents. In one of those instances, he was allegedly assisted by at least 700 members of police forces from different units.

Alcantara also claimed that the murdered police officer was behind the harassment of Nestlé workers on June 3, 2002, marked by the indiscriminate firing of Armalite rifles by policemen accompanying him.

He said at least 17 workers were injured in these incidents, allegedly caused by mauling, clubbing and stone-throwing, and the spraying of water laced with chemicals and tear gas.

"The harassment also included continuous zoning in the communities around the Nestlé plant and surveillance of company workers," Alcantara said.

He expressed his gratitude to the residents of Laguna and Cavite for providing information which, he said, helped in carrying out the punishment on Paglinawan.

He assured the people of the two provinces that the NPA would continue to serve them.

"Through your active support to the democratic revolutionary movement, the people's court will give justice to the victims of military and police violence," the Melito Glor spokesperson said.

He warned the police and the military against committing indiscriminate destruction of property and gross violation of human rights.

Paglinawan was ambushed by four gunmen while driving through Barangay Lumel, Silang, Cavite, last Friday.

The police officer died instantly from several gunshot wounds to the head and body.

Although investigators have been looking into a private land dispute as a possible motive for the killing, police also theorized that Paglinawan might have become a target of communist guerrillas because of his involvement in various labor conflicts in Cabuyao, particularly the strike at the Nestlé plant. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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Poser from MJ pals: Where in the world is James Nixon?

By Philip C. Tubeza

SUPPORTERS of Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez seeking his release from prison in Florida may have to go to Estonia in the Baltic Sea to search for his missing travel documents.

The Baltic republic is where James Nixon, the former legal attaché of the US Embassy in Manila, is now posted, according to lawyer Ricardo Diaz, the chief of the National Bureau of Investigation's Interpol unit.

Jimenez's supporters claim that Nixon had lost the congressman's travel documents while he was being extradited to the United States last December.

The alleged loss led to Jimenez being tagged an undocumented alien by the US Immigration and Naturalization Service which ordered his detention.

'Simple misunderstanding'

This meant Jimenez's continued imprisonment even after posting bail for the original charges for which he was extradited.

Diaz said, however, the reported loss of Jimenez's passport may have been a "simple misunderstanding." He said the travel documents must still be with the US authorities.

"I myself turned over the documents to James Nixon," Diaz said.

Jimenez's congressman allies have meanwhile filed a congressional resolution expressing the "condemnation, outrage and indignation" of the House of Representatives at what they described as the "inhuman and serious wrongdoing" committed by Nixon against Jimenez.

Representations

Congressmen Prospero Pichay Jr. and Wilfredo Villarama, who introduced the resolution, urged the justice and foreign affairs departments to make representations with the US government to "rectify the serious damage suffered by Jimenez and his family at the hands of Nixon."

In a press statement, the two legislators said these two offices should request the US Embassy, State Department and the US justice departments to issue travel documents in favor of Jimenez, his wife and son, and to remove the cloud of doubt on the legality of Jimenez's entry to and presence in the US.

In seeking an inquiry into the Jimenez case, Pichay and Villarama said they wanted to assure the protection of the civil, political and human rights of Filipinos who may become the subject of future extradition requests.

GMA to induct new PWU prexy today

BENITEZ-REYES

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is expected to induct into office Dr. Amelou Benitez-Reyes as the incoming president of the Philippine Women's University (PWU) System at installation rites at the Philippine International Convention Center at noon today.

The President lauded the appointment of Dr. Reyes as PWU's new president, with a word on the heightened role of university presidents.

"The responsibility of a university president encompasses much more than ensuring quality education, better faculty, good facilities and effective administration," she said. "The leadership of a university is crucial to the role of the academe to ensure a brighter future for our nation."

To be preceded by a Holy Mass to be concelebrated by Bishop Rolando J. Tirona and 10 priests led by Msgr. Vicente Bauson, the installation rites will open with the passing of the PWU legacy by Dr. Helena Z. Benitez, chair of the PWU Board of Trustees.

This will be followed by the reading of the appointment by Dr. Vicente Jayme, vice chair of the PWU Board, the presentation of the academic collar by Dr. Jose Conrado Benitez, PWU immediate past president, and presentation of the university mace by Dr. Manuel S. Alba and Dr. Renato L. Paras, PWU Board of Trustees.

Chairperson Ester A. Garcia of the Commission on Higher Education will lead the investiture of the presidency on Dr. Reyes, assisted by the family of the new president, and witnessed by heads and representatives of various sectors.

A special Apostolic blessing will be administered by Bishop Rolando J. Tirona, while PWU Chaplain Fr. Saturnino Pilotos Jr., will read a special Papal blessing sent by the Vatican for the new president.

US, Britain press ahead with new war resolution

From page A1

boost at the open debate that starts Tuesday afternoon when nations that aren't on the 15-member Security Council can express their views on the Iraq crisis.

The debate was scheduled at the request of South Africa, which heads the Non-Aligned Movement of 115 mainly developing nations who are overwhelmingly opposed to the war. More than 40 countries have signed up to speak, and the session is not expected to conclude until Wednesday afternoon when Washington and London are likely to circulate their proposed resolution.

Signaling the opposition ahead, French President Jacques Chirac said Monday his country would oppose any effort to draft a new UN resolution to explicitly authorize war against Iraq at this time. "There is no need for a second resolution today, which France would have no choice but to oppose," Chirac said.

France, Russia and China—all opposed to war now—could veto any resolution. The three council powers are pushing to prevent a rush to war and let inspectors do their work while the United States and Britain insist that time has run out for Saddam Hussein to disarm peacefully. Only Spain backed Washington and London in Friday's debate.

Nonetheless, officials in London and Washington were moving ahead, toning down what was supposed to be a very tough resolution. Diplomats said the final text would place Iraq in material breach of its obligations and reiterate that Saddam now faced serious consequences, but it likely would not make an explicit call to arms.

The other options include issuing Saddam Hussein an ultimatum to relinquish power or meet a set of conditions within a tight deadline, according to council diplomats.

On Monday, leaders of the 15-member European Union papered over their bitter divisions on Iraq, issuing a joint statement declaring that Europe wanted Iraq's peaceful disarmament and "force should be used only as a last resort."

However, the European Union made clear that Iraq had "a final opportunity" and "must disarm and cooperate immediately and fully" or face the consequences.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who attended the EU meeting, also urged the Iraqi leadership to "understand the urgency and the gravity of the situation" and "to choose compliance over conflict."

The wording of the EU statement could influence negotiations over a second UN resolution, but council diplomats said it didn't address the hardest issue of how long more Saddam should be given.

US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said repeatedly on Sunday talk shows that Saddam had weeks, not months, to disarm or face a military strike.

Over the next few weeks, council diplomats said, the negotiations will focus on defining "a last resort."

Both Washington and London have said they already have the authorization they need in a resolution passed last November and in earlier resolutions, to go ahead with a military strike. But the British oppose any military action without a second resolution.

US and British diplomats said they expected Security Council negotiations on the draft to be wrapped up by the time chief weapons inspector Hans Blix delivered his next report on March 1.

But council diplomats said they expected Blix and chief nuclear inspector Mohamed ElBaradei to appear before the council again in late February or early March to report on the progress of inspections and Iraq's cooperation.

"At 11:55 a.m., a U-2 surveillance plane entered Iraqi airspace and reconnoitered several areas of Iraq and left Iraqi airspace at 4:15 p.m.," the Iraqi foreign ministry said in a statement Monday night. "The reconnaissance operation lasted four hours and 20 minutes."

The statement did not indicate what areas were covered by the flight and efforts to contact a UN spokesperson in Baghdad for confirmation were unsuccessful. *Reports by AP and Reuters*

Ombudsman clears Acsa, junks NBI case

From page A1

solved Ramirez on the grounds that she performed acts of disclosure that "sufficiently and substantially complied with the provisions of the Amla."

"I thank God for giving me the courage to endure all of this," Ramirez tearfully told the INQUIRER yesterday. "Even though I am just a small person, I was given justice. There is still justice in this country."

Ramirez said she immediately phoned her husband upon hearing the good news.

She and her husband are still in hiding, fearful that the syndicate behind the tax scam will go after her. They live in a safehouse, separated from their children.

"They're OK," she said of their kids. "But I still don't live with them."

Asked if she would file countercharges against the NBI for what she went through, Ramirez said she would leave it up to God.

Her lawyer Virginia Pinlac is likewise not planning to demand an apology from Wycoco or the President.

"I would rather not," Pinlac said. "Wycoco and GMA should know what to do."

Sought for comment, Wycoco said: "We maintain that the NBI had nothing personal against Acsa when we filed the charges.

"If the Ombudsman cleared her, that is the rule of law. We will respect the rule of law."

He said the NBI would decide on its course of action once it receives a copy of the Ombudsman's findings.

The NBI, as well as Malacañang, drew flak over what befell Ramirez. Last year, she emerged among the top choices in the annual search of the INQUIRER for the 2002 Filipino of the Year—as an icon for the Filipino as perennial victim.

Ramirez yesterday said that while she did not want to relive the experience of being erroneously presented as a suspect before the media, she would not think twice about once more exposing irregularities in the government.

"Those who know of any anomaly should not be frightened to report it," she said.

Joven

The NBI accused Ramirez, her predecessor Ramon Joven, and branch manager Artemio San Juan of failure to disclose to the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) transactions involving four suspicious accounts, each exceeding the threshold amount of P4 million.

The graft investigators found sufficient grounds to prosecute Joven.

They said Joven was liable for not reporting the four suspicious accounts, bearing the fictitious names Roberto S. Lucero, Alma A. Clemente, Joven C. Aquino and Jose M. Francisco, and which were all opened during his stint as branch cashier.

The investigators upheld Ramirez's defense that it was she who had initially reported to her superiors a suspicious P26-billion check deposit, "which led to the eventual discovery of the [four] suspicious accounts."

Ramirez had reported an account under the name of Esmayatin Bonsalagan, which was opened with a P26-billion deposit on June 14, 2002, through a China Bank check.

She first alerted San Juan and later relayed her concerns to the regional area head, Carmencita Bayot.

This initial exposé prompted the Landbank to perform a special audit that subsequently uncovered the four fraudulent accounts with the Binangonan branch.

According to the findings, the accounts were put up by a syndicate to divert checks payable to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

While the four accounts were opened during Joven's term, deposits continued even after Ramirez took over in April 2002.

The Ombudsman's resolution said Joven was "obviously remiss in the performance of his obligations when he failed to report 'covered transactions' to the AMLC or to his immediate superior within the institution."

It noted that when Ramirez also called Joven's attention to the accounts, he "invoked the tenuous position that these are valued accounts with legitimate businesses."

"Thereby, he indicated his predisposition to disregard the requirements of Republic Act No. 9160, in violation of the latter," it said.

San Juan

The resolution ruled on two separate complaints stemming from the discovery of the fraudulent accounts.

The first complaint, lodged by the AMLC and with San Juan as sole respondent, cited him for 15 counts of violation of RA 9160. The second complaint, filed by the NBI in behalf of Landbank president Margarito Teves, named San Juan, Joven and Ramirez as respondents.

San Juan was cleared for insufficient evidence in the second complaint. But the Ombudsman adopted the Department of Justice resolution charging him on the basis of the first complaint.

Joven was charged with six counts of the same violation, corresponding to the dubious transactions he did not report. Each count carries a penalty of six months to four years in jail or a fine of P100,000 to P500,000.

Had the complaint against Ramirez prospered, she could have faced a maximum of 44 years in jail for the 11 citations against her.

Pinlac said Ramirez felt vindicated by the Ombudsman resolution.

She said Ramirez was scheduled to appear as a government witness next month before the Binangonan court hearing the case against San Juan.

But Wycoco said the NBI would try to find out why Ramirez was cleared and San Juan and Joven were not.

"They had the same participation," Wycoco pointed out.

SolGen upholds probe of Nani Perez

From page A1

Rama said that the PAGC had found Perez guilty of the charges, and imposed a one-year suspension on the former justice chief.

But he could not impose it because Perez was no longer a government official. Also, all PAGC rulings need the approval of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Under the law, the PAGC could only recommend to the President administrative sanctions against erring government officials.

But administrative sanctions, particularly suspension and dismissal from service, are applicable only on those who are still in government service.

After the oral argument, Rama tried to shake hands with Perez, but he was embarrassed.

Perez, refusing to offer his right hand, told Rama: "Your hands are tainted. You are a misguided missile."

Prima facie evidence

In a 33-page comment, Assistant Solicitor General Alexander Gesmundo and Beatrice Ann Pangilinan asked the Court of Appeals to lift the TRO it issued against the PAGC on Feb. 3.

The CA, upon a petition filed by Perez, issued the TRO to stop the PAGC from proceeding with its investigation on Perez's supposed culpability for allegedly barring the disclosure of travel records of ranking government officials.

In seeking the prosecution of Perez, the OSG claimed that there was prima facie evidence that Perez committed violations of the Constitution and the laws.

Also, the OSG said that the PAGC had jurisdiction over the charges, and Rama "did not act with grave abuse of discretion in not inhibiting himself because there is legal and factual basis for his inhibition."

In the comment, the OSG also said that Perez allegedly violated the Constitution when he issued last Nov. 16 a memorandum prohibiting the Bureau of Immigration from divulging the travel records of the President, her Cabinet and members of Congress.

"There is prima facie evidence that petitioner (Perez) violated the constitutionally enshrined fundamental principles of right of the public to information and full disclosure by the state of all its transactions involving public interest," said the OSG.

Protected right

It pointed out that the "right of the people to information and access to public documents is a protected right, although it may be regulated."

However, the discretion to regulate "does not carry with it the authority to prohibit access, inspection, examination or copying."

Clearly, Perez's issuance of the memorandum "can be the subject of an administrative investigation of respondent PAGC, where he can actively take part to justify the reasons for its issuance."

The OSG said that Perez was given several opportunities to explain his side, and to be heard during the preliminary conference.

As to the claim that Rama had already prejudged the case, the OSG said that published newspaper articles "readily show that in its contents neither one of them purports to indicate any badge or bias on the part of Rama."

With these grounds, the OSG then asked the CA Fifth Division to lift the 60-day TRO, deny Perez's plea for a writ of injunction, and dismiss his petition for "lack of merit."

Another violation

On Dec. 19, Rama charged Perez with violations of two constitutional provisions, which included the policy of full public disclosure, and three laws in connection with the memorandum.

Rama said that Perez also violated Republic Act No. 6713 or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees and Administrative Code of 1987.

Perez, who was then on a leave of absence amid charges of bribery by Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez, vehemently denied the charges.

He said the Palace graftbuster was "ignorant of the law."

Perez said Rama violated the law, and "he is the one guilty of oppression."

He claimed that the policy of full public disclosure was not absolute as "there are restrictions" like threats of terrorism.

Perez also slammed Rama for acting as a "prosecutor, as a complainant and will act as a judge."

CONSUMER & OIL PRICE WATCH

Private Sector

BIG 3 MUST EXPLAIN OVER RECOVERY OF 68 CENTAVOS

The Consumer & Oil Price Watch will ask the big three oil companies to explain to the public the 50 centavos oil price increase over the weekend.

Distribution of Weighted Average Oil Price Increase

	Total	70% Diesel	30% Gasoline
Due the oil companies	P .86	.60	.26
Actual oil price increases On Feb. 3 and Feb. 16	P 1.54	.89	.65
Over recovery	P (.68)	(.29)	(.39)

Diesel - The weighted average oil price increase due the oil companies is 86 centavos broken down as 70% diesel and 30% gasoline. The total increase for diesel should be 60 centavos and not 89 centavos or an over recovery of 29 centavos on diesel.

Gasoline - The total increase in gasoline, after deducting the under recovery due the oil companies on account of the Clean Air Act, should be 26 centavos and not 65 centavos or an over recovery of 39 centavos.

The oil companies should explain why the price increases were made too early on February 3 and 16 when the higher crude cost of $28.02 in January will not be refined until the week of February 17th based on a 30-day inventory level.

DEREGULATION REQUIRES GREATER TRANSPARENCY

We will ask for a meeting with the Department of Energy together with the big three oil companies and the new players in order to reconcile the computation of oil price increases or decreases. In a deregulated environment there is need for greater transparency in oil pricing. This means adhering strictly to "direct cost recovery principle" as the basis of monthly increases or decreases in the price of petroleum products.

IMPACT OF OIL PRICE INCREASE

Because of this recent oil price hike, transport groups are expected to file their petition for a fare increase as diesel has now exceeded the P15.50 benchmark. Likewise, labor groups will ask for adjustments in wages or allowances to offset the transport fare increase. Also, there will be pressure to increase the prices of basic commodities.

We are appealing to the transport sector to likewise rationalize their petition for a fare increase by breaking down their operating cost component. The Consumer & Oil Price Watch will work closely with the DTI Secretary Mar Roxas who has called for a National Price Coordinating Council emergency meeting to assess the impact of the oil price increase on the prices of basic commodities.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2003

OPINION

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Eugenia D. Apostol
Founding Chairman

INQUIRER

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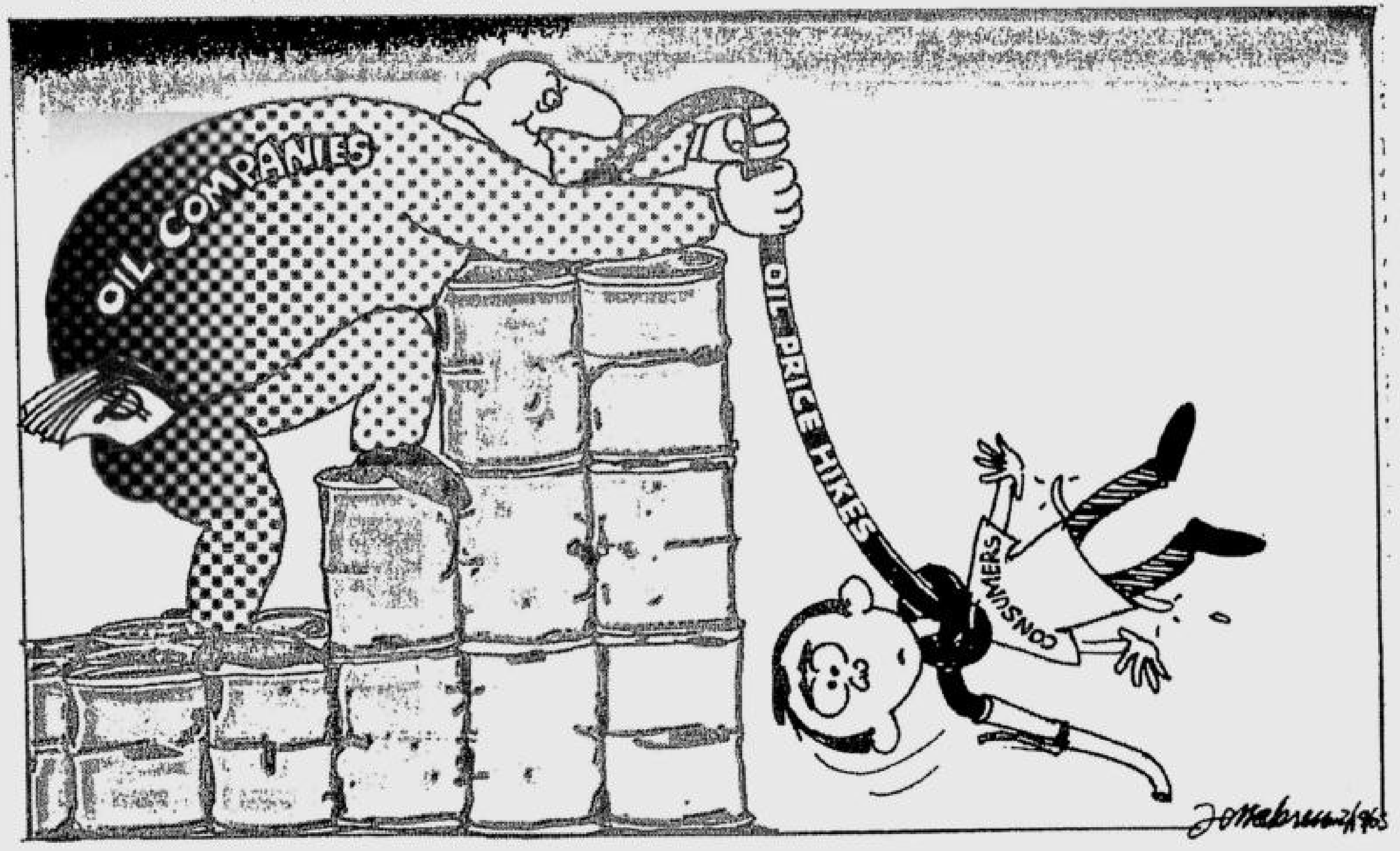


Squeeze

EDITORIAL

MUCH too quickly and surely, the Philippines is feeling the effects of Congress' failure to pass an anti-money laundering law acceptable to the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force.

A recent government bond issue worth 300 million euros fetched only 100 million euros in subscriptions, and financial analysts blamed this on market uncertainty caused by the risk of FATF sanctions.

In Japan, a Philippine National Bank application to set up a remittance system for some 186,300 Filipinos living there was rejected by postal authorities because the Philippines remained on the FATF blacklist. Every Filipino worker using the Japanese post office to transfer money is now suspected of money laundering, a senior PNB official was quoted a saying. Officials of several organizations of overseas Filipino workers have also noted delays in the processing of dollar remittances by some banks which treat such transactions as suspicious.

Even the continued slide of the peso has been traced partly to fears of FATF sanctions. After the exchange rate sank to a two-year low of P54.199 to $1 on Monday, Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura observed "some nervousness in the market" caused by possible FATF sanctions.

Several senators scoff at such reports, dismissing them as attempts by administration officials to pressure Congress to accept the FATF's impositions. Sen. Ralph Recto said he could not believe the rejection of the PNB application by the Japanese postal system was part of FATF sanctions. Sen. Joker Arroyo, for his part, accused the country's top monetary and finance officials of not only failing to defend the new Anti-Money Laundering Act passed by Congress but even prodding the FATF to reject it.

Congress passed on Thursday amendments to the law, including a lower threshold of P550,000 for amounts to be subject to investigation, but kept a provision requiring authorities to obtain a court order before looking into suspicious accounts, except in a few cases like drug trafficking and terrorism. The FATF immediately rejected the amendments and gave the Philippines until March 15 to correct the deficiencies or face additional countermeasures.

The House version of the law would have conformed with the FATF framework. But the majority of the senators insisted on the watered-down version that the FATF found unacceptable.

Some senators bridle at the idea of following the "dictates" or "impositions" of the FATF, considering them as virtually an infringement on national sovereignty and making it appear as if the Philippines is being singled out for strict surveillance by the developed nations which form its core.

The fact, however, is that the anti-money laundering measures the FATF prescribes are intended for "universal application." FATF members themselves are not exempt from the strictures they have set on other countries. One has to have a persecution complex to believe that the FATF has been acting like a bully toward the Philippines.

If conforming with FATF conditions is too demeaning for our senators, they can always reject them. That would effectively take the Philippines out of the international financial system. Then Arroyo and company can set up an alternative system that is completely free from the dictation and meddling of rich Western nations.

In the meantime, the administration should just keep pushing for the passage of the necessary amendments. The squeeze is on and the problem is going to get much worse once the FATF really puts sanctions in place. There must be two or three other senators who can recognize the folly of tilting with windmills.

Apostles of war

FOREIGN COMMENT

BIN Laden's message came with the timing of a precision bomb and his voice, being bodiless and incomprehensible, appears even more repugnant. It proves what Bush, Powell, Rumsfeld and the CIA couldn't: that Bin Laden—if the voice was his—considers the Iraqi people as "brothers" of war against a common enemy, the US "devil."

The images and thoughts evoked by this message were the most powerful since the Sept. 11 attack, which now seems far away in time. He's the death apostle that Bush had promised to catch "dead or alive," but he's still well alive and hidden. He still sucks kids, soldiers, diplomats and inspectors into a vortex that turns faster and faster, clearly leading us where he wants to go: war.

La Repubblica (Rome)

Judge the fairness of GSIS reply

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

LAST Feb. 14 and 17, I wrote columns on the removal by Winston Garcia, president and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System, of the limit on the average monthly compensation (AMC) of GSIS members on which the monthly pension of retirees is based. Previously, the limit was P16,000. That means the pension and premiums of members were based on a maximum of P16,000 even if the member receives more than that in monthly compensation. The reason for that was the equitable and fair distribution of the pension fund to all GSIS members. The pension was to provide the retiree with his basic needs and not to continue to provide him with what he has been accustomed to with his salary. That is the essence of social security.

But Garcia abolished the limit starting January this year. So now, a GSIS executive (or any executive of other government financial institutions) receiving P300,000 salary a month, will get 90 percent of that, or a whopping P263,000 monthly pension after he retires. Ninety-nine percent of GSIS members, meanwhile, will get only an average of P9,000 or a little more in pension. Since the retiree gets back all or most of his contributions when he gets his five-year lump sum pension immediately after retirement, his monthly pension is sourced from the contributions of the current members. Is that equitable and fair or not?

The GSIS' vice president for public affairs, Nilo P. Racimo, again faxed a reply to defend his boss (that's his job, isn't it?).

While I don't agree with his justifications, I am quoting most of them in the interest of fairness and balanced reporting. You, the readers can judge for yourselves whether or not the removal of the AMC limit is fair to all the members, and not only to the high-salaried ones. Here is the GSIS reply:

Please allow us again to react, point by point, on the issues published in your column.

- **That "Garcia's illegal removal of the AMC limit…has obvious selfish reasons. It is to feather his nest when he retires."**

To set the record straight, GSIS president and general manager Winston F. Garcia has no vested interest nor personal selfish reason in removing the limit on the average monthly compensation (AMC) since he will not personally benefit from it. In fact, even if he wants to, he cannot even retire today since he has been serving the government for only nine years and the required minimum number of years of service for retirement is 15. At age 44, he is not qualified to retire under the GSIS retirement law as he is way below the minimum retirement age of 60 that would qualify him for pension benefits.

- **That Garcia "violated the law, Republic Act 8291, when he removed the ceiling on the average monthly compensation.**

Republic Act 8291 provides that the basis for the computation of pension benefits shall be the AMC and years of service. Further, it authorizes the GSIS Board of Trustees to formulate programs to effectively carry out the purpose of the Act. Therefore, when the GSIS Board of Trustees collectively approved the removal of the AMC in its Board Resolution No. 152, dated June 5, 2002, it implemented the provision of the law to its fullest extent. This means that finally, after 65 years of existence, the GSIS will be able to extend the full benefits of the law to all GSIS members, even those receiving salaries above P16,000.

- **That the GSIS "altered the formula for the computation of GSIS contributions without going to Congress for an amendment to the charter."**

In removing the AMC limit, we did not change any computation nor formula in any of the benefits under 8291. The only thing that changed is that there is no longer a maximum limit for the AMC. Premium contributions remain at a maximum of 9 percent for the member and 12 percent for the employer.

- **That "the removal will allow a very inequitable distribution of the pension fund among GSIS retirees."**

On the contrary, the purpose of the removal of the AMC limit is to remove the then prevailing inequities under the different retirement modes and implement the mandate of RA 8291 to allow all GSIS members to enjoy the full benefits of the law.

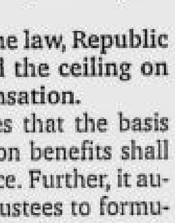
It must be noted that all GSIS benefits except life insurance is based on the AMC. Before the removal of the AMC limit under RA 8291, the AMC was limited to a maximum fixed amount, the latest of which was P16,000. This maximum amount was periodically adjusted.

On the other hand, retirement under RA 660 poses no limit on the AMC used for computation of benefits. However, only employees who were in the service before June 1, 1977 and after had the option to retire under RA 660. Those who entered the service on June 1, 1977 onwards had the limited options to retire under PD 1146 or RA 8291. This created a discrepancy in the retirement options among those earning more than the prevailing AMC limit. Salaries of employees who were in the service before June 1, 1977 were fully covered while those who entered the service before June 1, 1977 and after were covered only up to the extent of the AMC limit prevailing at the time of retirement. Thus, the decision to remove the cap or limit on the AMC.

The removal of the AMC limit intends to give GSIS retirees a real replacement value of the income they were receiving while in active service. More later.

Costs

There's the Rub



Conrado de Quiros

CHARLEY Richardson and Nancy Lessin are but two of the plaintiffs in a suit against George Bush and Donald Rumsfeld for violating the American Constitution, specifically the part of it that says the president may not declare war without congressional approval. "The president (Bush) is not a king" is the theme of that suit, a reference to the fact that the US Constitution was crafted to do away with the practice of European monarchs of arrogating unto themselves the power to declare war.

Richardson and Lessin however are unusual in that, unlike most of the other plaintiffs in the suit, they have not withheld their names from fear of repercussions. Not the least of them being called unpatriotic. They are doubly unusual in that they are the parents of a soldier in active duty. What has driven them to this heroic length is anxiety for their son, 25-year-old Joe, an Arab-language trained radio reconnaissance commando in the US Marines.

"From our perspective," says Lessin, "those who say we gotta go to war aren't going anywhere, nor are their loved ones. It's other people's children that are now in harm's way. We worry about Joe. We don't want him to be wounded or die. And we don't want him to be forced to wound or kill innocent Iraqi civilians. That would kill a part of him and a part of us."

The lawsuit will probably not prosper. But it's worth pondering for what it says. Lessin's comment about the warmongers not going to war themselves but shoving everybody else into it is particularly apt in reference to Bush and Rumsfeld—and halfway across the world to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. They're the kind that likes to wear fatigues, talk tough and dive for cover at the first sign of trouble. Like I said before, cowards are always courageous with other people's lives.

But even more worth pondering is Lessin's comment about dying not just in body but in spirit. The problem is not just being killed, it is killing—particularly innocent people. That is a luminous insight, resplendent in its purity: "That would kill a part of him and a part of us."

The problem is not that Iraq will be able to put up a stiff resistance, or even wreak terrorist attacks on the United States—the absence of which will inevitably be trumpeted by Bush and Rumsfeld as proof of the wisdom of their action. The problem is the carnage the US bombs and troops will visit on the Iraqi population, soldiers and civilians alike. There is a steep price to pay for that easy victory. It would kill a part of Americans and a part of America itself. You would think the Vietnam War would have taught that country a thing or two about losing a soul.

American leaders have reckoned the costs of a war on Iraq largely in terms of what it would do to the American economy. They have not reckoned them in terms of what it would do to the lady with the torch that stands at the gateway of America. The irony is that Bush has always advanced his war on Iraq—and well before that his "war against terror"—as opting for freedom rather than tyranny, life rather than death, a utopian future rather than the Dark Ages. Yet freedom, life and a bright future, let alone a utopian one, are the last things those wars are securing for America or the world. The opposite is true. It's brought America and the world no end of tyranny, death and Dark-Age type intolerance and destruction.

Bush—and Tony Blair—have repeatedly pointed to the tyrannical regime of Saddam Hussein, Blair in particular recently justifying an invasion of Iraq as a "humanitarian act." But look where Bush's reign—the word is apt: it is hard to reconcile him with democracy, as thinking Americans know it—has brought America itself.

In a brilliant article in the February issue of Harper's, titled "Regime change," Lewis Lapham points out the sea change that has happened not to the world since 9/11 but to the United States since America first embarked on its colonial adventure at the turn of the 20th century. The one who predicted with great prescience what would happen if America did so, says Lapham, was John Quincy Adams, who warned as far back as 1821 that America would then "involve herself beyond the power of extrication in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom. The fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force…."

That is in fact what has happened. As Lapham puts it: "The Bush administration equates the American spirit with power, not with liberty. During the months since the fall of the twin towers, it has assumed the colors and usurped the standard of freedom to jury-rig the framework of an autocratic state." I leave the reader to read the article for himself (I hope it's in the Internet) and look at the long list of ways Americans have agreed to give up their birthright for a pot of porridge, their ironclad freedoms for tenuous security, their individual assertiveness for collective paranoia.

The problem is not just Iraq, it is the country as well that would rid it of weapons of mass destruction, a country that keeps the most number of them, including the ones that massively destroy the hearts and minds of its citizens. The problem is not just Saddam Hussein, it is the American leaders who have turned from using the force of liberty to the liberty to use force on enemies, including citizens who insist on remembering what their founding fathers stood for. There is a price to pay for Bush's war, and in the end it's not just the American soldiers, some of whom will come back in body bags but most of whom will come back with their souls torn beyond repair, who will pay it. It is every American herself.

It is America itself.

The obstinacy of Makati and Mandaluyong

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE THREE-WEEK traffic experiment of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando suspending the "color-coding" scheme is ending on Friday, and we have to wait until then to know whether the trial has succeeded in easing traffic congestion in Metro Manila.

Fernando is seeking to extend the experiment for another week, this time focusing it on private vehicles. Pending the surveys of the vehicle flows in Metro Manila during the trial period, no one can claim definitive results.

But an important impediment has emerged, which is likely to create distortions in the assessment of results. The impediment consists of the exclusion of Makati City and the unilateral withdrawal of Mandaluyong City from the program. The exclusion of Makati was based on the grounds of unverified claims that the suspension of the color-coding scheme would aggravate traffic congestion in the city.

Mayor Benhur Abalos of Mandaluyong went back to color coding, claiming traffic flow was "unmanageable." In both claims, no evidence or study of traffic flow was presented.

These exemptions will necessarily distort the results of the experiment. Even though Makati authorities consented to let the experiment run on parts of Edsa, C-5 and the South Superhighway on the city's periphery, color coding was enforced in most of the city streets, especially in the central business district.

Makati's refusal to be part of the experiment resulted in the shift of traffic flow to Mandaluyong, many of those streets feed into Makati. Manila and Makati are the two main cities of Metro Manila, with Makati taking the honors of being the financial and business center.

In refusing to join an experiment undertaken by a supra-municipal league, designed to solve metropolitan problems, including traffic control, Makati and Mandaluyong have undermined the concept of the Metro Manila Development Authority and have reduced the MMDA chair into a figurehead.

The decision to implement the suspension of the color-coding scheme was agreed by the Metro Manila mayors. But the experiment was immediately crippled by the non-cooperation of Makati, from whose center radiates the bulk of traffic affecting neighboring cities.

Metro Manila, otherwise known as the National Capital Region, is more than the political, economic and cultural center of the nation. The municipal services of the Metro Manila cities are so linked and interdependent that no one city, even if it is the richest and the largest, can separate itself from plans affecting metropolitan services. For example, in the transport system, traffic routes and the light rail system pass through boundaries of several cities. An independent action by any city on transport and traffic facilities is bound to create major dislocations or disruptions, ensuring the failure of any traffic experiment.

For example, if Makati refuses to cooperate in metropolitan-wide health measures combating an outbreak of large scale bubonic plague (due to uncollected garbage) by turning back from its hospitals victims of the plague from neighboring cities, the plague will not stop at its boundaries. Its combative and arrogant authorities are likely to perish from that plague.

Being the richest Metro Manila city, Makati would like to exhibit its clout and economic power to the neighboring cities. When it rejected participation in the suspension of the color-coding scheme, Makati sent the message that it can afford to go it alone and its will can prevail, even if the rest of the Metro cities ganged up on it.

Fernando may not be the most lovable MMDA chair since the concept of a metropolitan authority was introduced during the Marcos regime, but Fernando gets things done and is innovative. His experiment should have been given a chance to work or prove itself useless, on the grounds that color coding is clearly not the last word in easing traffic gridlocks.

During the Marcos dictatorship, the metropolitan authority concept was born, headed by Imelda Marcos whose title was governor of Metro Manila. It was originally known as the Metro Manila Commission created in November 1975. Then it became the Metropolitan Manila Authority in January 1990. In 1995, it became the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, with a rotating chair chosen among Metro mayors.

Imelda was appointed governor by her husband, the dictator President Marcos. She was more than a coordinator of metro services. Imelda had strong political authority, and her commission was backed by a large budget. Since the dictatorship was behind the metropolitan authority, what she wanted to do was accomplished and the Metro mayors could not block her projects, let alone pull out of her myriad metropolitan traffic experiments.

The head of the MMDA today is only one among equals—i.e., mayors. The MMDA has also transformed into a consensus body, whose decisions can only succeed if the Metro mayors allowed their plans to succeed. Makati and Mandaluyong have not given the Fernando experiment a chance to succeed. They have prematurely decided it as a failure, and because Makati's size is crucial to the success or failure of the experiment, its exclusion ensured that the experiment cannot but fail.

Fernando and the MMDA apparently have been able to call the bluff of transport operators to wreck the experiment. The MMDA responded to threats of strikes and non-compliance by bus operators with fines on offending bus drivers. If the public utility operators and ambulant vendors clogging the sidewalks and tricycle vehicles pouring out noxious fumes do not follow rules handed down by the MMDA, the reason is that they perceive the MMDA as a paper tiger. This perception is fueled by the fact that even among MMDA members, some of them think they are above the rule of consensus. This is the only plaster that holds the MMDA together.

Where war hurts

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MY brother-in-law Nonoy, who's based in Florida, called last Valentine's Day, mainly to greet his sister Bel, our next-door neighbor, on her birthday but also to catch up with the rest of the family. When we talked, his first question was: "How are things there? How are you holding up? I hear there's panic-buying going on already!"

I had to laugh at such a doomsday scenario, reassuring him that while indeed life had gotten harder in these islands, things hadn't deteriorated to the extent of having to trawl the grocery aisles for hard-to-come-by necessities.

Later, telling the hubby about our exchange, we resurrected the hoary joke about just "panicking" because we had no money for "buying." But I had to wonder at the turn of events that has brought us to this pass, back to the bad old days of the immediate post-Ninoy assassination, when half the day was spent joining protest rallies, and the other half driving from one grocery to another in search of such basics as bath and laundry soap, cooking oil, sugar and sardines. Years and an Edsa Revolt later, panic-buying again after yet another coup try, I opened my kitchen cupboard to store a cache of canned sardines only to find it still filled with sardines bought in the heat of previous crises.

But isn't it ironic that we, who have nothing to do basically with the face-off between the Shrub and the Mustachioed One, should also be suffering the consequences of war talk and global tension? I've started wincing this past month every time we have to load up on gasoline, noting how quickly prices have risen even as the value of the peso has kept on falling. And nothing has happened so far except for the exchange of denunciations and angry rhetoric. How much will gasoline cost once the invasion takes off?

* * *

THE RISING gas prices have sparked in turn their own vicious spiral of inflation. Bus and jeepney groups have defied government's pleas to hold off any fare hikes, saying they have no choice but to petition for increased fares since, according to a report, gasoline prices have increased four times this year. And it's just February!

I haven't done a detailed accounting yet, but I've noticed, too, how my grocery budget seems to be buying fewer goods these days.

And this is where war hurts, intruding into our smug, safe middle-class worlds mainly through the kitchen and the dining table, in the shrinking capacity of our money to buy what we deem the most basic commodities and the bottom line of "decent" existence.

And the poor? I have a suspicion that life for the poor remains what it is—desperate and difficult—war or no war, so they will feel its impact only remotely, though at the most life-and-death level. I mean, for instance, if a health center has run out of medicines for even the simplest diseases because of drastic budget cut-backs, it can well mean the death of a child of a poor family.

So, are we really all that hopeless and powerless? Is our only response to the drums of war beaten by Bush and his minions confined to gritting our teeth at gas stations and tightening our household belts? I think not. We can raise our voices against war, and make sure our government hears them loud and clear. We don't have to march to the US Embassy at this moment, where in all likelihood we'll bump into those bunch of statehood lunatics, but there are other venues for shouting for peace. For starters, here's one rally even the staid middle class will be comfortable with:

* * *

WORRIED about the prospect of war? Then join the massive "Rosary Rally and Mass for Peace" at the Edsa Shrine this Friday, Feb. 21 at 4 p.m. "This mammoth expression of peace is in solidarity with the insistent call of the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, for the world to make every effort to avoid a war," the organizers said.

Another intention during the Rosary Rally and Mass for Peace is the cessation of hostilities in Mindanao and for meaningful and lasting peace in that region.

The event will be specially graced by the visiting Pilgrim Image of Our Lady of Fatima, whose message of peace resounds throughout all the Christian world.

The Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, Archbishop Antonio Franco, will be the main celebrant at the Mass at 4:30 p.m. Co-celebrating with him are the auxiliary bishops of Manila and the bishops of the suffragan dioceses: Novaliches, Parañaque-Las Piñas-Muntinlupa, Antipolo, Malolos, Imus, and San Pablo and their clergy.

Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila, will lead the praying of the Rosary right after the Mass.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines will also encourage similar prayer rallies for peace in all dioceses in the country.

The Rosary Rally-Mass for Peace joins other efforts to avert war and work for peace to reign not only in the world's trouble spots but also specifically in conflict-ridden Mindanao.

"The Holy Father has said in the past that 'war is always a defeat for humanity' and that 'humanity must not resign itself to the inevitability of war,'" the organizers note.

In one of his recent addresses, the Pope called on "everyone to take the path that leads to peace, dialogue and hope."

Those going to the shrine on Friday are requested to bring candles and their rosaries.

* * *

FOR those who've been calling the INQUIRER offices, wanting to know how to get in touch with "healing priest" Fr. Joey Faller, he says you can call him at the National Service Committee of Catholic Charismatic Renewal-Philippines at Tel. No. 524-3160, from Wednesday to Friday. You can also try calling him through his secretary, Cecille at 0917-833-0488.

Found letters

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

FRIENDS and family who have gone over the personal effects of people who have recently passed on often ask me what to do with personal papers. Should they keep letters and photographs? My suggestion, although it takes more effort, is to try and return them to the people who originally sent them. For example, my mother cared for photographs and after her death we went through her things and filled two *balikbayan* boxes of pictures. Many pictures came from family and friends and go back 50 years, returning them is a very touching gesture. More complicated, however, are diaries and love letters. Do you read them or respect privacy and consign them to the bonfire immediately? I cringe when diaries and letters are burned simply because I would have no historical career today if the Rizal family destroyed his papers. One cannot imagine what is lost to history because Filipinos tend to destroy or recycle old papers and books.

My mother also collected lots of old newspapers and magazines. She had arranged these in dusty piles we always dreaded as fire starters. Opening some of these old magazines made me realize that one person's garbage is another person's treasure. What was junk for most meant money to the *dyaryo* and *bote* man and column material for me. Finding clippings from the magazine of the Daily Mirror showing my mother with hair that measured four and a half feet (she was only 5'2") was surprising to her grandchildren. Opening a December 1948 issue of This Week magazine, I was fascinated by spot drawings made by H.R. Ocampo and these led to a October 1948 issue that carried an exchange of letters between Jose Garcia Villa and Manuel Viray in the "Letters" section. Although I am not a literary historian, my association with the late Doreen Fernandez left me with a passing interest in the lives of writers. I always think that knowing the lives of writers helps us if only to understand their works. But Villa was very sharp when he wrote this from Madison Avenue in New York:

"Permit me to correct an impression made in a statement accompanying one of Mr. Viray's recent articles. It is to the effect that I am an admirer of Mr. Viray's poetry. I am afraid that this is untrue, for the simple reason that Mr. Viray has not yet written any real poetry. My frank critical opinion is that his work is not on a literate plane, i.e., his writing is not not literate, however literary; therefore as literature (which is writing) it does not exist. I am sorry that I have to make a harsh statement about Mr. Viray, especially as he is, I understand, the leader of your advance movement; but I shall add that my own opinion of his writing applies as well to the other 'poets' not excluding Mr. Da Costa.

"As for Mr. Viray's critical development, I am afraid that he is no critic either. Otherwise he could not regard as poetry the contents of his anthology 'Heart of the Islands,' nor think especially of Toribia Mano's effusions as fine poetry.

"After watching Philippine 'poetry' this far, I have come to the sad conclusion that poetry in English has no prospects whatsoever in the Philippines—i.e...that it cannot be written by Filipino writers. An exception or two may arise after a long period of time, but these writers will remain exceptions. The reason why Filipino writers are at a disadvantage in the writing of English poetry—is that they have no oneness with the English language. Poetry requires a very subtilized and specialized knowledge of language required to write good prose (which in itself is difficult to attain), is not adequate enough for the writing of poetry—one needs a oneness with the language. Lacking this, the Filipino writer will never achieve real poetry in English."

What was more revealing was that Villa in his letters, always asks for copies of the magazine. In October he even offered to write a poem in exchange for a year's subscription. The editors were kind enough to allow Manuel Viray to reply to Villa and published both letters. Viray wrote:

"Thank you for showing me Mr. Jose Garcia Villa's letter. In justice to Mr. Mallari, the reading public must know that Mallari's notes on me were based precisely on the fact that when Mr. Villa was still enthusiastic about the Philippine short story and 'poetry,' he saw it fit to give three asterisks to the group of poems which appeared in Veronica and in the Literary Apprentice. Mr. Mallari's words were these: 'His (Viray's) poems especially found favor in the eyes of such discerning critics as Jose Garcia Villa and Salvador Ponce Lopez.' The way Mr. Villa paraphrased this statement to disown his 'three asterisks' is, of course, his concern. Whether this can be blamed on the fact that man's memory is notoriously short, I have no way of knowing. I have never claimed to be a critic or the leader of any so-called advance 'movement.' Such judgment as I have included in my series of articles are born of a concern for Filipino writing. The excellence, the durability, of these judgements I leave to the readers, living or yet unborn."

Literary historians have a lot of material for their work scattered in letters in periodicals, but then one will need a great deal of patience to find a historical needle in this large haystack.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.net

Another one for Edsa

COMMENTARY

Sylvia L. Mayuga

PROVOKED by her lovely new piece on Edsa '86, my fellow-writer Gemma Nemenzo and I were enjoying an e-mail exchange on whether or not it was a "bogus miracle" when life suddenly turned our chat into a public show-and-tell.

It began when NBI agents swooped into the Tibayan Group of Companies' main offices in Las Piñas, past noon of Feb. 7.

With only a search warrant, they made off with office equipment and six employees leeringly "invited for questioning" at the NBI compound. In a society where unequal distribution of wealth and power remains the root of daily tragedy, government agents as goons for private interests are likely to make a news audience long numbed by injustice, flip yawning to the sports and movie pages.

I did not have that luxury. My sister-in-law Josie swept in late Friday evening, saying that her 26-year-old daughter was among those picked up in lieu of the missing big boss Jesus Tibayan. He is Josie's younger brother but she knew neither his whereabouts nor a lawyer to call.

Too late for two mothers to enter the belly of the beast looking for their young afforded Friday little sleep. On Saturday we learned: employees whose experience of crime was hitherto confined to news, movies and snatched cell phones, had been bullied into illegal detention. Sans a warrant of arrest, psywar's empty threats, half-truths, outright lies and mauling of the resistant quickly turned the "invitation" into signatures on "criminal arrest" forms "legalizing" detention. Worse, two lawyers gave advice for reasons the detainees could not grasp, "This is SOP. Sign so that your arrest is documented."

They had become hostages to smoke out Jess Tibayan. I knew him only from his sister's stories but, with pensioners, overseas workers and other plain folk, this 34-year-old financial wunderkind of grass-roots origin had given me two years of serene writing time with monthly investment interest checks far more generous than bank rates. The checks stopped coming in January amid media brouhaha over "pyramid scams" in the unlicensed Multitel, Glasgow, MMG and MTST "investment houses." Then came media reports of an alleged, not yet announced, SEC cease and desist order (CDO) to the licensed Tibayan Group itself.

With unintended accuracy, my niece texted me about this "cease and disease" trumpeted by media before the SEC announcement—obviously trial by publicity, preemptive like Bush on Iraq. We then reviewed the rash of misinformed investor pullout in December now seriously disturbing the companies' cash flow. No choice but to wait, realizing that Jess had become a player big enough to make waves with his populist sympathies in a system rigidified by inequality under an old boys' club. The CDO was most puzzling. Consulting with the SEC since early 2002, he had invited its audit. Facing misinformed panic, he had downsized his work force by half and declared a moratorium on selling new shares, pending a conference with the SEC on audit results. So why the CDO and illegal arrests?

Hair-raising answers were not long in coming, the first from Jess himself. He just said SEC chair Lilia Bautista was surprised by the NBI swoop when his voice trailed off into silence, visited by rumors of his own impending abduction. This was no comfort to five new detainees—two men keeping their presence of mind and three tearful women next taken to the Las Piñas City Hall for an inquest Saturday afternoon. With resolution of charges awaiting Monday, unjust detention would continue in an "arrest" craftily timed for a weekend with lawyer friends out of reach. By now my niece was a near nervous wreck, a choice hostage badgered by more leering questions on her uncle's whereabouts.

Names of old Mabini comrades now too busy or distant to call in emergency floated through weekend-long brooding on a serious backslide in the human rights restored by people power. Yet Edsa was there again, under a radiant sun in cool air around the Las Piñas Hall of Justice Monday morning. Small, medium and large investors putting their own financial worries aside to surround the detainees and express trust in Tibayan under clouds of intrigue and tyranny.

Bright ideas on crisis management bounced around while awaiting word on what turned out to be a complaint of estafa led by—surprise!—NBI agents who made the swoop and Yari Santos, a large investor/alleged ex-general buddy of NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco. Prodding more misinformed investors to join them, this cabal seems ready to grab company assets extra-legally as "settlement"—and never mind the rest. *Por bida*, martial law gangster movie *na naman ini*?

A long dark journey into light peaked 5 p.m. Monday with prosecutor Cynthia Luang's resolution finding "no basis" for the arrest and ordering the detainees released, pending preliminary investigation on Feb. 24, midstream of Edsa's 17th anniversary. In fascist ritual, they were however escorted back to the NBI premises with long arms, threatened some more, and returned behind bars before foot-dragging official release at 8 p.m. *Ma*-drama *ining* NBI.

It has now been served notice of a case against it at the Ombudsman (lousy theater and worse fashion sense unfortunately not among the charges). Again radiant people power is invited to surround the beast in new trial. From its NBI lair and the environs of SEC lawyer Tomas Syquia (who recommended the CDO, now up for review), it continues to spread disinformation in Tibayan's tactical silence. This beast sired by the seven deadly sins and mothered by tolerance of injustice is the same one twice defeated, all too briefly, at Edsa.

It roams. But if "miracle" is indeed divine grace working through nature and history, I nominate Feb. 7-10, 2003 as a new entry in people power's book of victory. The promise holds: the meek shall inherit the earth.

Sylvia L. Mayuga is a veteran freelance writer on historical and cultural issues.

THEY SAID

Finish the job

"There is a lot of noise against this offensive, but the silent majority of the Christians and Muslims in Mindanao, to include the lumad, want to have this thing done and over with."

—National Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes on military offensives against lawless elements

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What is the root of the language problem?

LETTERS

THE ENGLISH of members of Congress, government officials and presidential advisers whom President Macapagal-Arroyo deals with, could have triggered her dogmatic unconstitutional order to Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus on reverting to English as the medium of instruction. The deterioration of our English literacy as she put it, cannot be blamed on not using English as the medium of instruction because using English for this purpose never stopped completely. Some of these government luminaries could be the product of the old English policy which the President wishes to revert to. Education's present bilingual policy stipulates English as the medium for Math and Science and yet studies show we are not doing well in these fields.

This new policy is another instance of our leaders laying the blame on anything that comes to mind instead of at the root of the problem. In this instance it is the perennial inadequate budget allotted to education. Consequently, what prevails is poor instruction in the English language due to unqualified teachers and teaching materials riddled with errors, produced by equally unqualified authors.

Our multilingual situation where average Filipinos, going about their daily lives, use more than one language, complicates the issue. What may be labeled as poor English stems from language mixing which is inevitable for any bi/multilingual, but usually remedied when speaking to foreigners.

Language for communication should not be lumped together with language of instruction. The latter is the means to acquire knowledge and for the learner, his first language, or one close enough to it, works best. A foreign language as the medium of instruction becomes an obstacle to learning. This is why we have, in reality, a dismal literacy rate. How can a pupil starting out become literate in a strange language—one he does not know, does not use and which is very differently structured from his own? Language for communicating globally should be learned as a second language. In fact, one does not have to be grammatically correct (probably the deteriorated English the President referred to) to be understood in international communication in English.

The problem of education which the government should address, besides giving it the necessary budget, is how to enhance learning. This can be done best at the primary level where literacy should be the paramount goal. This is more easily and surely attained in the child's first language (any one of our over 100 languages) or one close enough to it (Filipino). A literate person means one with the ability to understand perfectly everything he reads and can write down everything he can think. Once a child is literate, learning becomes a coordinated activity between the child/learner and the teacher.

—CONSUELO J. PAZ, Ph.D.
professor, Department
of Linguistics,
University of the Philippines,
Diliman, Quezon City

PMAP sees better English skills as crucial

THE PERSONNEL Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP), the premiere human resource management organization in the country, representing more than 1,000 member companies and HR practitioners nationwide, wishes to make its stand known regarding the use of English as the medium of instruction in schools and universities.

We speak from the viewpoint of professionals responsible for identifying and developing the competencies required for business and organizational success.

We believe that English should be used as the medium of instruction for our schools and universities. We believe that the use of English as the medium of instruction is not contrary to the value of teaching nationalism to our students.

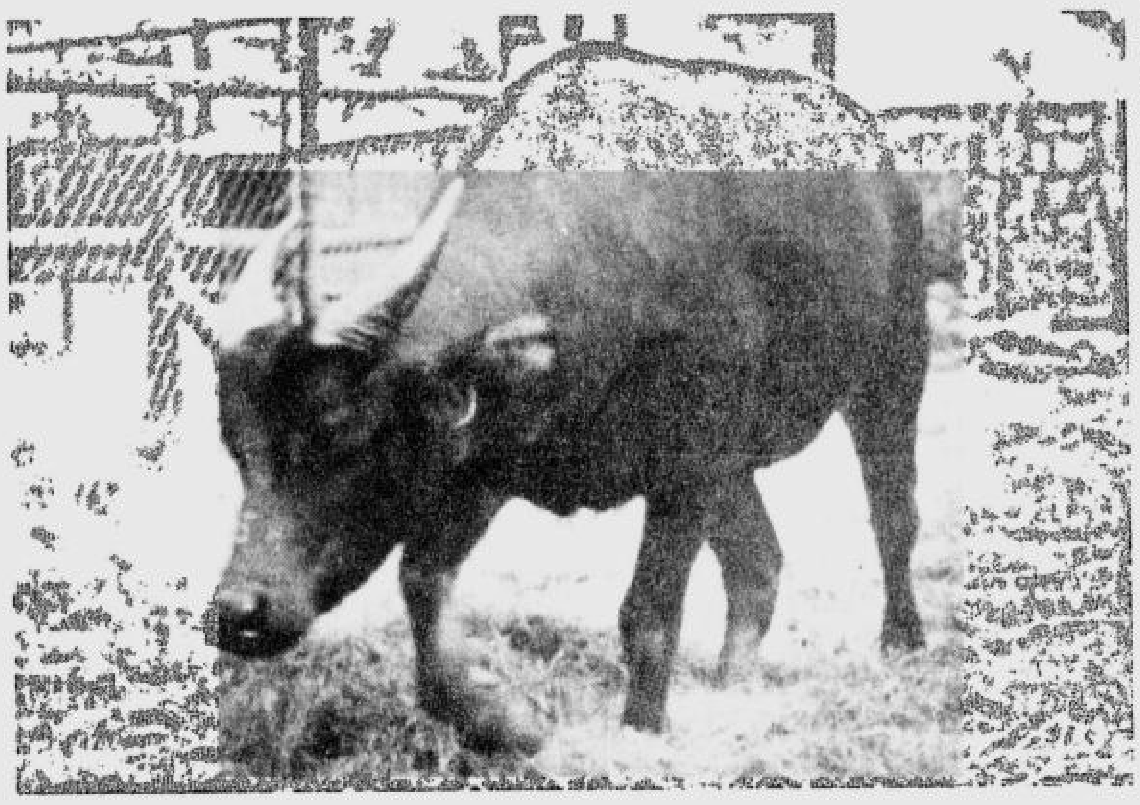
We believe English will continue to be the "global language" for all books, magazines and newspapers. The mediums of communication during international conferences or meetings are also in English. The language used to communicate with people in most countries is English. Other countries, like China, are spending huge sums of money teaching their students English. We don't want to be isolated from the rest of the world.

A PMAP research study titled "The Challenge of Staffing Entry Level Positions" showed that a significant number of applicants fail the initial interview because they do not project themselves well. Since the interviews are conducted in English, their lack of ability and confidence to speak English are obviously a major factor in their inability to make the grade.

In this day and age, many multinational organizations are now virtual organizations where people report to superiors in another country. Our knowledge of English also gives us an advantage in this area; in fact, quite a number of Filipinos have been promoted to regional positions partly because of their facility with English. We also know that many companies from America and First World countries outsource work to the Philippines because of our ability to speak English. It is in services such as this where we have a competitive advantage. Given the need to be globally competitive, we should equip our students and in fact strengthen their command of the English language. We can do this by making English our primary medium of instruction and by adding more English subjects at the primary or secondary level of education.

We express our solidarity, with President Macapagal-Arroyo, the government and all other sectors and individuals who have a stake in the human resources development and management in the country and in the efforts to make the Filipino a world-class worker, professional and manager.

—RAMON S. MEDINA, FPM,
president, Personnel
Management Association
of the Philippines, 670 Lee St.,
Addition Hills, Mandaluyong City



Will Jaworski act on tamaraw inquiry?

WHEN will Sen. Robert S. Jaworski, chair of the Senate committee on environment and natural resources, conduct that long-delayed inquiry as asked for by Sen. Loren Legarda's Senate Resolution No. 20 titled, "Directing the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources to Conduct an Inquiry in Aid of Legislation into the Endangered Status of the Tamaraws and the Government Measures for the Conservation of the Species"?

I have written Jaworski three times regarding this matter but unfortunately I did not get the courtesy of a reply.

Meanwhile, the number of tamaraws in the island of Mindoro continues to dwindle.

—PAUL R. MORTEL,
MBLA Court, Malanday,
Marikina City

Milk-feeding program not blocked

THIS is with reference to the column of Neal H. Cruz, "Bureaucrat blocking feeding program for kids," last Feb. 13, 2003. The subject of the story is a grant given by the US government to Land O'Lakes Inc. (LOL), the largest dairy corporation in the United States, to implement a milk feeding program in the Philippines. The grant is in the form of 4,000 metric tons of milk powder valued at about US$4.4 million.

I would like to present the National Dairy Authority's (NDA) side of the story.

Cruz is correct, the NDA has no milk. It is our Filipino milk producers—whose interest the NDA is mandated to protect—who have the milk. In fact, they produce 23 percent of our total liquid milk supply—no mean feat considering the odds against them.

We cannot blame Cruz for taking the word of the NGO representative who spoke with him. Red tape is a reality in the Philippines. I do not claim that all red tape has been eliminated in the NDA. But in the case of the proposed LOL milk-feeding program, I can assure you that the NDA, as the agency mandated by The National Dairy Development Act of 1995 (RA 7884) to coordinate feeding programs that use milk and milk products, is doing its level best according to the laws of our country without compromising the integrity of our policies and procedures.

This program was approved by the US government in favor of LOL without prior endorsement of the Philippine government. Last September 2002, Anthony Drexler, of LOL visited the NDA office to announce that he intended to carry out a milk-feeding program for 120,000 children in the Philippines, in the model that he has implemented in Bangladesh. Drexler was emphatic in claiming that the LOL program was a purely private effort and would not have anything to do with the government. We explained to him that the program that will use our public school system and is targeted for the school milk feeding that is supplied by our local producers, will surely have to deal with the government.

The way LOL has conducted itself in the Philippines shows the level of cooperation and basic compliance that it is prepared to do.

To date, we only have the address of the Suarez & Navasa Law Firm as the address of LOL Foundation Philippines Inc. and have not received a proper program of implementation from the said foundation until the meeting last Feb. 4, 2003 . Before that, we were furnished with general descriptions of the systems used in other countries.

When persuaded to submit the list of schools to be covered by the program, LOL through Universal Robina Corp., sent us a list titled "Summary of Teachers Needed in Camarines Sur." To this date, we do not have the start and finish date of feeding for each school—a feature that we have asked to be submitted since September 2002. This feature is important because our National Nutrition Council and the Department of Education prescribe that the feeding program should go for at least 120 days. A list was finally submitted last week.

LOL has been advised by the Department of Social Welfare and Development that all donors must register with the DSWD. Up to last week, DSWD records do not show any attempt of LOL to comply.

LOL has been advised to have their milk tested by the Bureau of Food and Drugs. To this date there is no certification issued by the BFAD.

We are open to all forms of assistance, including donations, but not at the cost of food safety, local dairy development and the observance of the country's policies and procedures.

—SALVACION M. BULATAO,
administrator, National Dairy
Authority, Visayas Avenue,
Diliman, Quezon City

Ford paid correct duties, taxes

WE are writing to present the facts regarding the issue raised against Ford Philippines by Conrad Banal in his column last Feb. 6.

Ford Philippines has paid the proper customs duties since it started operations in 1999. The Board of Investments (BOI) has clarified, through a letter to the Bureau of Customs, that participants in the Motor Vehicle Development Program (MVDP) located inside economic zones/Pezas are entitled to pay the corresponding CKD tariff rates ranging from 3 to 10 percent on CKD parts used in the assembly of CBU vehicles.

Based on this letter, the Bureau of Customs issued Customs Administrative Order (CAO) No. 1-2003 on BOI's Industrial Policy on MVDP Importations, which was signed by Commissioner Antonio Bernardo and approved by Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho. The CAO states: "CBUs assembled from imported CKDs by participants of the Motor Vehicle Development Program located inside ecozones/Peza shall upon withdrawal for local consumption be assessed the corresponding CKD tariff rates and not the tariff rates for CBUs. . ."

While we do bring in CKD parts from markets like Taiwan and Japan, these are assembled and built into CBU vehicles solely by Ford Philippines in our ISO-certified manufacturing facility in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

At present, our plant assembles the Ford Lynx and Escape for both the domestic and Asean export markets (i.e. Thailand and Indonesia).

Ford has always been a committed partner of the government, helping pull in investments, shoring up dollar reserves and paying the proper taxes. In fact, Ford has been advocating reforms in the vehicle excise tax system in order to clarify ambiguities under the present system. It is therefore, unfortunate that it is being accused of trying to undermine the tax system.

Ford Philippines has not and will never compromise its integrity. We are building our business but not at the expense of the government and certainly not at the expense of our customers.

—HENRY CO,
president,
Ford Motor Company,
Ford Group Philippines,
1 American Rd,
Greenfield Automotive Park- SEZ,
Santa Rosa, Laguna

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Iraqi poet says fear of Saddam pervasive

FEATURE

William Maclean

KUWAIT—The best way to convey how Iraqis feel about their ruler, Omar Ali decided, was to write a poem about his own imagined murder at the hands of Saddam Hussein.

Even in death, the ghoulish verses go, the Iraqi writer's corpse smiles at Saddam and assures the Iraqi president that his family will not dare to avenge the shedding of his blood.

The 55-year-old writer says outsiders wondering how Saddam keeps control despite mounting US pressure to disarm him fail to appreciate how fear of his security apparatus paralyses dissent, even among many exiles, and breeds submission.

"Politically we are living in the Stone Age, although we have Cadillacs, business suits and mobile phones," Ali said.

Ali's presence in Kuwait places him in a minority among the more than three million Iraqis in exile, for he is one of the very few now permitted to live in the tiny, oil-rich country occupied by Iraq in 1990-91.

But the burly former teacher's opinions are typical of a generation of intellectuals who fled Saddam's rule in the 1970s, horrified by his suppression of any hint of opposition.

To Ali, Saddam is a bloodthirsty dictator and his Baath party is led by "savages," backward tribal thugs who have terrified Baghdad's urban elite into exile through theft and murder and wasted the country's oil wealth on war.

"These are village toughs with an inferiority complex.

Imagine that this mentality has seized all the channels of culture and human activity in Iraq," he said.

He would reluctantly support an attack on Saddam even though he distrusts the Americans, saying he wants an end to Saddam's rule and he wants to return to Baghdad. He argues that left in place Saddam would kill more Iraqis than would be killed in a US-led war.

"I'll cry if it happens because I cannot do anything. And not just me, all Iraqis. We are sheep, not humans. Our fate is in the hands of Saddam and (US President George W.) Bush." If Saddam falls, Iraqis will seek out those who have killed in his service and settle accounts, he said.

"Revenge is in our blood. Revenge will happen," he added.

Saddam's Baathists still cast a shadow in Kuwait because of bitter memories here of their seven-month occupation. Among the small Iraqi community, anxiety about one of the Arab world's most determined and unpredictable survivors is palpable.

Here, as elsewhere in the diaspora, many Iraqis speak to reporters only on condition of anonymity or under assumed names.

"Their first fear is of the Iraqi government," said Ali, which is not his real name.

"Exiles have relatives back in Iraq and fear the view of the government is that 'even if I cannot punish you, I will punish your brother (in Iraq) because at least he is available'." "Inside the country, most Iraqis feel as if they are in a very small room with very high walls and no windows, so their ideas about the outside world are very hazy."

Tens of thousands of Iraqi expatriates fled Kuwait in the later stages of the occupation or shortly after the US-led liberation, fearing reprisals from vengeful Kuwaiti youths for looting and human rights abuses by Iraqi occupation authorities.

In the subsequent decade they have dispersed all over the globe. Kuwait's Iraqi population today is about 7,000, dramatically down from about 200,000 before the invasion.

Some Iraqis with long residence in Kuwait were gradually allowed back, Ali among them. Friendships between Kuwaitis and long-time Iraqi residents were strained by the occupation and have still not fully recovered despite widespread intermarriage.

Kuwait discourages Iraqi residents from any form of political activity or contact with the exiled opposition.

But those with many years residence in Kuwait seem generally well treated, and some note the occupation gave Kuwaitis a first-hand taste of life under Saddam, in the process making many of them more sympathetic to Iraqi exiles.

Ali spent eight of his 27 years away in Jordan but for him there is no place like home. He has returned to Baghdad twice, once for a lengthy stay, and phones relatives there often. He dreams of returning to Baghdad under a new government.

"All my friends are there. My footprints are on its streets.

My gaze is imprinted on its buildings and gardens. I adore it. I consider it mother, wife and daughter. This is Baghdad for me.

And this bloody man (Saddam) prevents me and about four million other Iraqis from living there." Opposition to Saddam may not translate into unreserved support for his US-backed overthrow, he cautioned.

"Iraqi heads have been filled with the idea that America is a criminal country that did wrong all over the world—in Japan with the atomic bomb, in Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iran, Palestine and South America. We don't trust Americans. They make friends with tyrants.

"So there is tension in the whole of Iraq. There is hope, but it is hope in a dark place. What weapons will the Americans use? Maybe they will kill us before we see freedom."

Reuters

HER EXCELLENCY
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
President
Republic of the Philippines

February 2003

UNITED FOR CLEAN AIR

Dear Madame President,

We are writing this letter to you in our deep concern over the deteriorating health of our children, of our friends, our associates - due to the worsening state of our air pollution. This cuts through all classes: A - B - C - D, affecting especially the children who suffer severe respiratory ailments because of the poor quality of our air.

Being a developing country, the marginalized bear the heaviest burden. They do not have the ionizers, air conditioners, or air filters to protect themselves. According to a recent study published by the World Bank, 32% of Chronic Obstructive Respiratory Disease sufferers are jeepney drivers. Incidents of Pulmonary Tuberculosis are also highest among jeepney drivers at 17.5%.

Tremendous resources will be saved by cleaning the air. Data shows that air pollution costs our country US$430million (P2.1Billion) annually in health costs! And that's for four major cities only! This cost even excludes non-health impacts stemming from congestion such as loss of productivity, damage to ecosystems and infrastructure. Furthermore, the naming of Metro Manila as one of the top five most polluted cities in the world is a serious indication that the citizens and leaders of this country must act now.

Seventy percent (70%) of air pollution in Metro Manila comes from vehicular emissions. Given our wind and rain – we could have clean air if we could just STOP the production of more polluting vehicular emissions. This means this can be done in your term! This could be your legacy- our quality of life.

A vibrant economy will not give us quality of life – if we cannot breathe clean air!

Madame President, clean air for ourselves, clean air for our children – this is all we ask from you.

We ask for the full implementation of the Clean Air Act.

Respectfully,
UNITED FOR CLEAN AIR PETITIONERS:

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Coordinator, Lingkod Tao-Kalikasan

ADVT.

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

134 killed in S. Korea subway blaze

SEOUL, South Korea—A man ignited a blaze in a subway car with a flaming milk carton in South Korea's third-largest city on Tuesday, police said. Authorities said the blaze killed 134 people, with 99 still missing.

Another 136 people were injured in the blaze, the official from Taegu said.

A suspect was under interrogation, but police still did not know what motivated the attack or whether there were passengers still trapped in the subway. YTN all-news television channel and Yonhap news agency reported 12 maintenance workers appeared to be still trapped underground.

Authorities said that the fire had been extinguished by 1 p.m., about three hours after it started.

The injured were rushed to nearby hospitals, but their conditions were unknown, said Kim Byong-hak, a police lieutenant in Taegu city, 320 km southeast of Seoul. YTN reported that some of the injured were in serious condition.

Police were interrogating Kim Dae-han, 46, who witnesses said carried a milk carton box filled with flammable material into a subway car, said Kim, the police officer.

"When the man tried to use a cigarette lighter to light the box, some passengers tied to stop him. Apparently a scuffle erupted and the box exploded into flames," the officer said.

Thick black smoke billowing out of ventilator shafts of the subway. Downtown traffic came to a standstill as ambulances rushed to the scene. Orange suit-clad firefighters wearing oxygen tanks ventured into the subway.

Rescuers brought victims, their faces and clothes black with soot, up to the street in stretchers and slid them into ambulances. One witness detailed the chaotic scene inside the subway as the fire ignited. *Reuters, AP*

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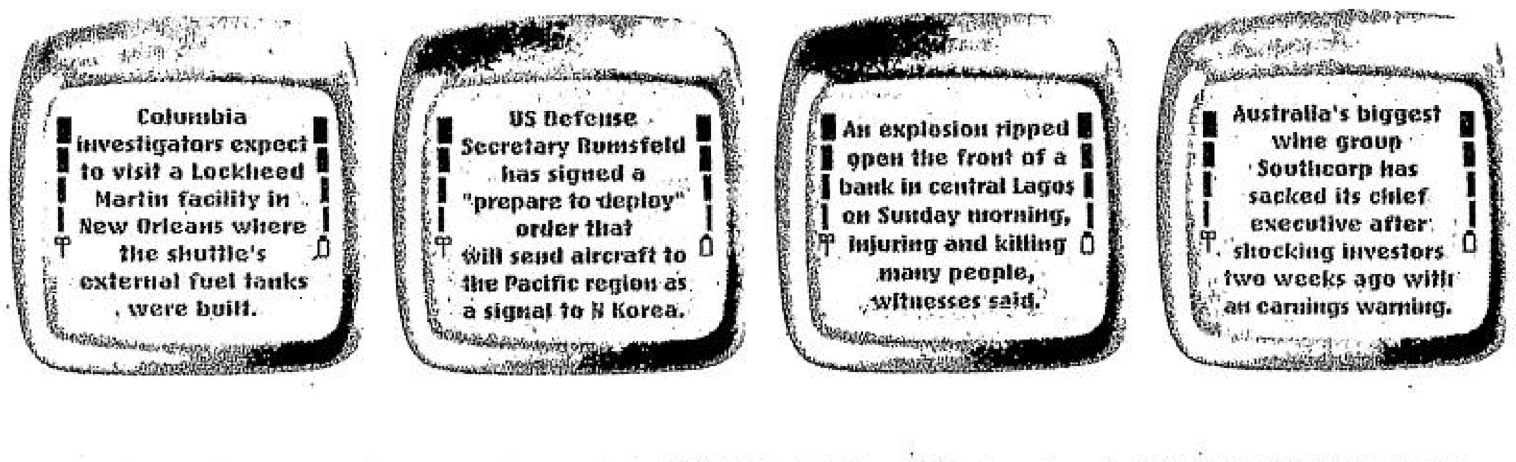

Columbia investigators expect to visit a Lockheed Martin facility in New Orleans where the shuttle's external fuel tanks were built.

US Defense Secretary Rumsfeld has signed a "prepare to deploy" order that will send aircraft to the Pacific region as a signal to N Korea.

An explosion ripped open the front of a bank in central Lagos on Sunday morning, injuring and killing many people, witnesses said.

Australia's biggest wine group Southcorp has sacked its chief executive after shocking investors two weeks ago with an earnings warning.

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Breach in wing still main theory in shuttle breakup

SPACE CENTER, Houston—An engineering professor who warned Nasa more than a decade ago about the catastrophic risk of launch debris says his analysis looks "more and more likely" now that the Columbia investigation board suspects a wing breach.

"It's looking like the debris is a better suspect than we had thought before," Carnegie Mellon University's Paul Fischbeck said Monday.

In the more than two weeks since Columbia disintegrated over Texas, the investigation board has publicly put forward just one hypothesis: that a breach in the left wing likely allowed superheated gases to penetrate the space shuttle as it descended through the atmosphere. The temperature surged in the left landing-gear wheel well just before the ship's destruction.

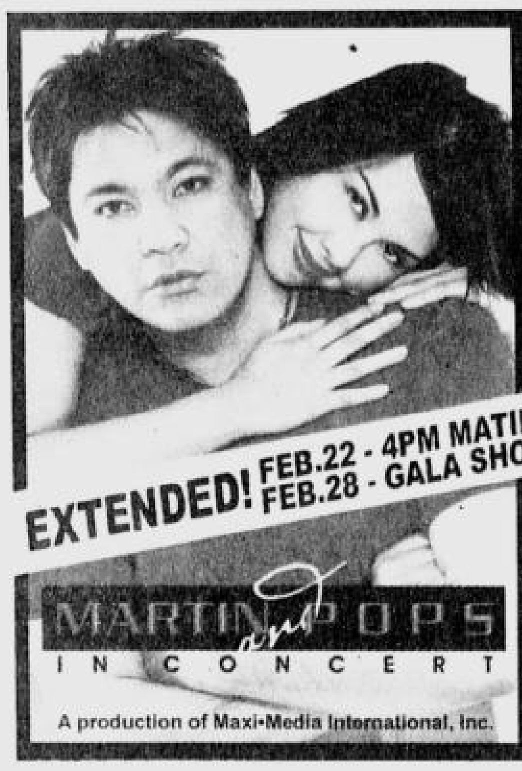
In a 1990 study and follow-up research, Fischbeck concluded that a shuttle could fail catastrophically if, during liftoff, debris hit the vulnerable underside of its wings, near the wheel wells.

Barely a minute into Columbia's flight Jan. 16, a chunk of insulating foam broke off the external fuel tank and slammed into the bottom of the left wing.

The breach in Columbia could have been caused by a meteor or space debris, or the landing gear compartment door could have been blown open during atmospheric reentry, Fischbeck said Monday. But the most likely scenario by far, he said, is that the foam damaged or knocked off thermal tiles, more tiles gave way during reentry and those missing tiles led to a burnthrough of the aluminum hull.

The head of the independent investigation board, retired Navy Adm. Harold Gehman Jr., has stressed repeatedly that he is not ruling anything out—including the debris hit during launch. While Columbia and its seven astronauts were still in orbit, Nasa concluded that any damage from the flyaway foam would not pose a safety threat.

Nine of the 10 board members met Monday at their new headquarters in an office building just 1.6 km from Johnson Space Center and planned to hold a news conference, their second, Tuesday. The 10th member, newly selected Sheila Widnall, a former secretary of the Air Force, will join the group later this week. *AP*



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Traffic scheme decongests London by 25%

LONDON—Traffic levels in central London dropped by a quarter on Monday as the world's largest congestion charge scheme went live under the watchful gaze of urban planners across the globe.

Cyclists celebrated and motorists fumed as the scheme began in a bid to cut traffic by 15 percent in the city center where average speeds have dropped below 16 km an hour—barely above those in the 19th century horse-drawn era.

"It has been very quiet today—partly because of the school holidays and maybe also because people were a bit scared to drive in," a spokesperson for the Automobile Association lobby group said. "Tomorrow or next Monday might be a better test."

Between 7 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. from Monday to Friday, motorists in the area, which runs from landmarks such as Hyde Park in the west to Tower Bridge in the east and St. Pancras in the north to Vauxhall in the south, will pay a fee of five pounds ($8.00) a day.

Hong Kong and Tokyo are among several cities to have expressed strong interest in the London scheme, which dwarfs those operating in Oslo and Singapore, as crawling traffic queues and lung-choking pollution become hot political topics.

"If the congestion charge works here, it will spread around the world before the end of the decade," said maverick city Mayor Ken Livingstone, who has staked his turbulent political career on the success of the London scheme.

Livingstone, who earned the nickname "Red Ken" for his left wing politics when he ran London in the early 1980s, readily admits to having borrowed the congestion charge idea from free market economist Milton Friedman.

While Livingstone spoke cheerfully on Monday of possibly extending the scheme, the opposition Conservative Party promised to repeal the charge if they win control of the city.

"It has cost huge amounts of money to implement and it is going to hit those sorts of people who have no other way of getting to work," Conservative Party leader Iain Duncan Smith told protesting Smithfield meat market workers. *Reuters*

Aussie experts seek new answer to warming

SYDNEY, Australia—Australian scientists seeking to ease global warming are going underground.

Researchers at a government-funded science organization said Tuesday they are investigating the possibility of burying up to 1 million metric tons (1.1 million tons) of carbon dioxide to help solve the problem of greenhouse gas emissions.

Carbon dioxide is among the gasses emitted by burning fossil fuels that are blamed for global warming.

The Australian government—which pumped nearly 22 million Australian dollars ($13 million) into the research—has drawn heavy criticism for refusing to sign the Kyoto Protocol which aims to slash the greenhouse gas emissions of industrialized nations.

Echoing Washington's stance, Canberra has said the pact would be bad for the economy.

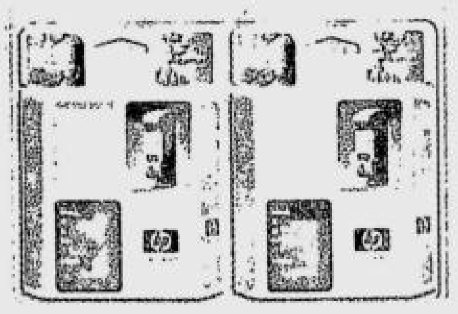
As part of a national experiment to show how emissions can be eliminated, scientists from the Cooperative Research Center for Greenhouse Gas Technologies is investigating whether it is feasible to lock up carbon dioxide in vast underground reservoirs left behind by mining operations.

Scientists hope to stage a demonstration in three to five years, said the center's executive director, Peter Cook.

"Australia has sufficient underground capacity to potentially store our total emissions for the next 2,000 years," Cook said in a statement. "We want to be sure it is safe, secure, practical and economic to do so."

The project will involve work with partners in the United States, Europe and Japan, to study technologies and power systems to allow carbon dioxide to be extracted from power plants and factory flues so it can be stored geologically.

The carbon dioxide would be separated from other gases and injected 1 km into the earth's subsurface, said Andy Rigg, the program manager for GEODISC, which stands for the geological disposal of carbon dioxide. *AP*



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Australia a 'major target' for terror attacks–Israel

CANBERRA—Israel has received specific information that Australia faces terrorist attack because its "generally poor security" makes it an easy target for Islamic radicals, it was reported here Tuesday.

The Australian newspaper quoted an anonymous "authoritative Israeli source" as saying Israel had significant, specific information that Australia was a high-profile target for al-Qaida-linked terrorists.

The paper said the Israelis believed al-Qaida had found Australia and southeast Asia easy to penetrate because of the region's generally poor security, porous borders and weak government and law enforcement structures.

As a result, the Israeli assessment was that there were dozens of dormant terrorist cells in the region that could be activated at any time, possibly as a result of military action against Iraq.

The newspaper said both the Australian mainland and its diplomatic missions were regarded as possible targets.

"In southeast Asia over the last few years, you've seen many local activities, bombings and so on, but increasingly they are part of a global agenda," the Israeli source said. "The key is preaching world jihad."

Australia has been one of the strongest supporters of the United States in the push to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, sending some 2,000 military personnel to the Gulf in preparation for possible military action against Iraq.

But Prime Minister John Howard rejected the view that his government's stance increased the likelihood of Australia becoming a terrorist target, saying all Western nations were under threat, regardless of policies on Iraq.

"If you think taking a different stance on Iraq buys immunity for your citizens, think of the German and French citizens who died in terrorist attacks at the hands of al-Qaida," he told commercial television.

Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said Iraq's links to al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations added to the danger that attacks could occur in Australia's immediate neighborhood.

"Iraq has a long history of state-sponsored terrorism," he said, adding that there was evidence operatives of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden had been in Baghdad.

New South Wales state Premier Bob Carr said he had not received any Israeli-sourced advice on possible terrorist attacks but the warning served as a reminder of the need to be prepared.

Australia has been on heightened alert since a car bomb killed more than 190 people on the Indonesian resort island of Bali last October, 88 of them Australian. *AFP*

Chicago police launch probe of deadly stampede

CHICAGO—US authorities launched a probe Monday into a stampede at a Chicago nightclub that left 21 people dead, as the families of the victims identified the bodies of their loved ones.

Chicago police chief Terry Hillard promised a "painstaking," investigation of the events that led to the fatal melee at a nightclub, E2, on the city's near South Side in the early hours of Monday morning.

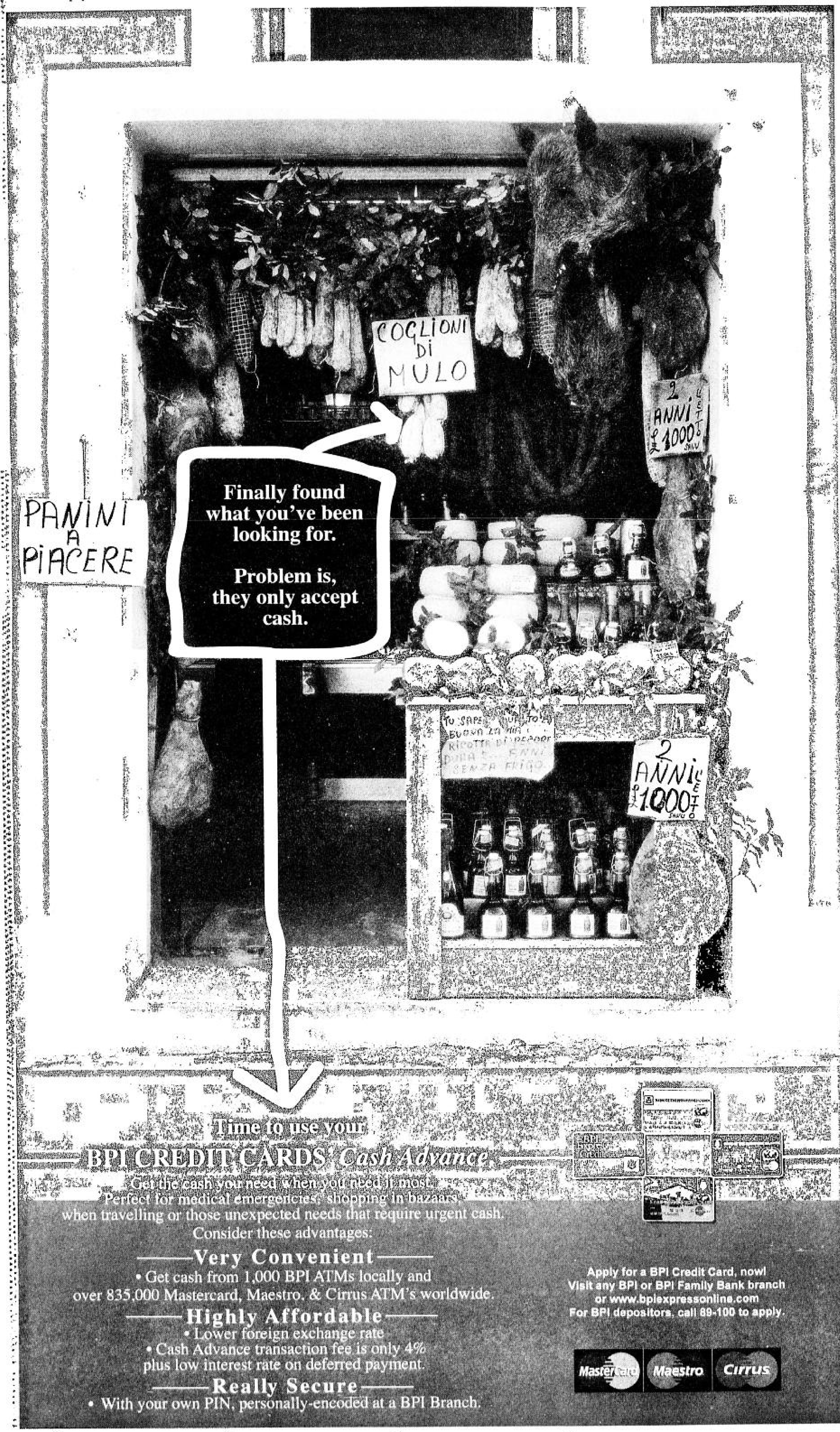
"Right now our investigation is at full tilt. It will be a very painstaking process," he said, lamenting what he described as a senseless, tragic loss of life.

The clubbers were apparently trampled to death when hundreds of young party-goers made a mad dash for the exit after security guards reportedly used mace or pepper spray to break up a fight between several patrons at E2.

"Everyone in the club was literally choking to death," Teresa Hall said, describing how one woman was "gagging so hard, she passed out."

"I was telling everyone to get to the floor, because you could breathe better on the floor than you could in the air." People caught up in the melee described how several hundred people headed for an exit at the bottom of the stairs in an effort to escape the acrid fumes on the first-floor dance floor.

"The crowd was so tight. We were gasping for air. No one could breathe in there. One girl literally died in front of us," Kristy Mitchell said. *AFP*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Anthrax from US used in 1993 cult attack in Tokyo, says researcher

DENVER—A Japanese cult attacked Tokyo in 1993 with an innocuous, readily available strain of anthrax sold by a Colorado animal vaccine company, an Arizona researcher said.

The anthrax was used by the Aum Shinri Kyo doomsday cult that in 1995 used sarin nerve gas to kill 12 people in an attack on a Tokyo subway station.

Paul Keim, an anthrax expert at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, told colleagues about the 1993 anthrax attack at Sunday's session of the American Association for the Advancement of Science convention in Denver.

Using DNA, researchers at the university traced the microbe to the Sterne strain produced by Denver-based Colorado Serum Co. The company makes a vaccine used by farmers worldwide to prevent anthrax in livestock.

The Sterne strain lacks a fragment of DNA necessary for the bacteria to cause disease.

"The cult was using a vaccine strain, which wasn't virulent," Keim said.

Colorado Serum officials did not return an after-hours phone call on Monday.

The same technique of genetic fingerprinting was used to unravel the source of the anthrax that killed five in the United States in 2001. Keim said he could not talk about the US attack because he has a nondisclosure agreement with the FBI.

In 1993, Japanese public health authorities had been tipped off about an eight-story building the Aum Shinri Kyo cult owned in Kameido, a suburb of Tokyo. Neighbors lodged 160 complaints about a terrible stench coming from the building, Keim said. *AP*

Asia divided over what to do about Iraq

TOKYO—Japan's prime minister warns divisiveness could give Iraq the wrong message. Australia's leader sees his popularity plunge but vows to stand doggedly by Washington—just days after hundreds of thousands of anti-war protesters take to the streets of Sydney.

From Christchurch to Beijing, the crisis over Iraq has created a deep divide throughout the Asia and Pacific region—just as it has in Europe and elsewhere.

Some traditional allies of America have serious doubts about Washington's hard-line approach; for those who are standing by the United States, it is often at the price of defying public opinion.

In Asia's large Muslim communities, US President George W. Bush's threat of military action has never had much support.

Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, has repeatedly voiced its opposition to unilateral action. Pakistan's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Aziz Ahmad Khan said "we have very clear policy on Iraq, and our policy is that peace should be given a chance."

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, who is to host Organization of the Islamic Conference talks on the Iraq crisis later this month, says he is "mystified" by Washington's stance toward Baghdad.

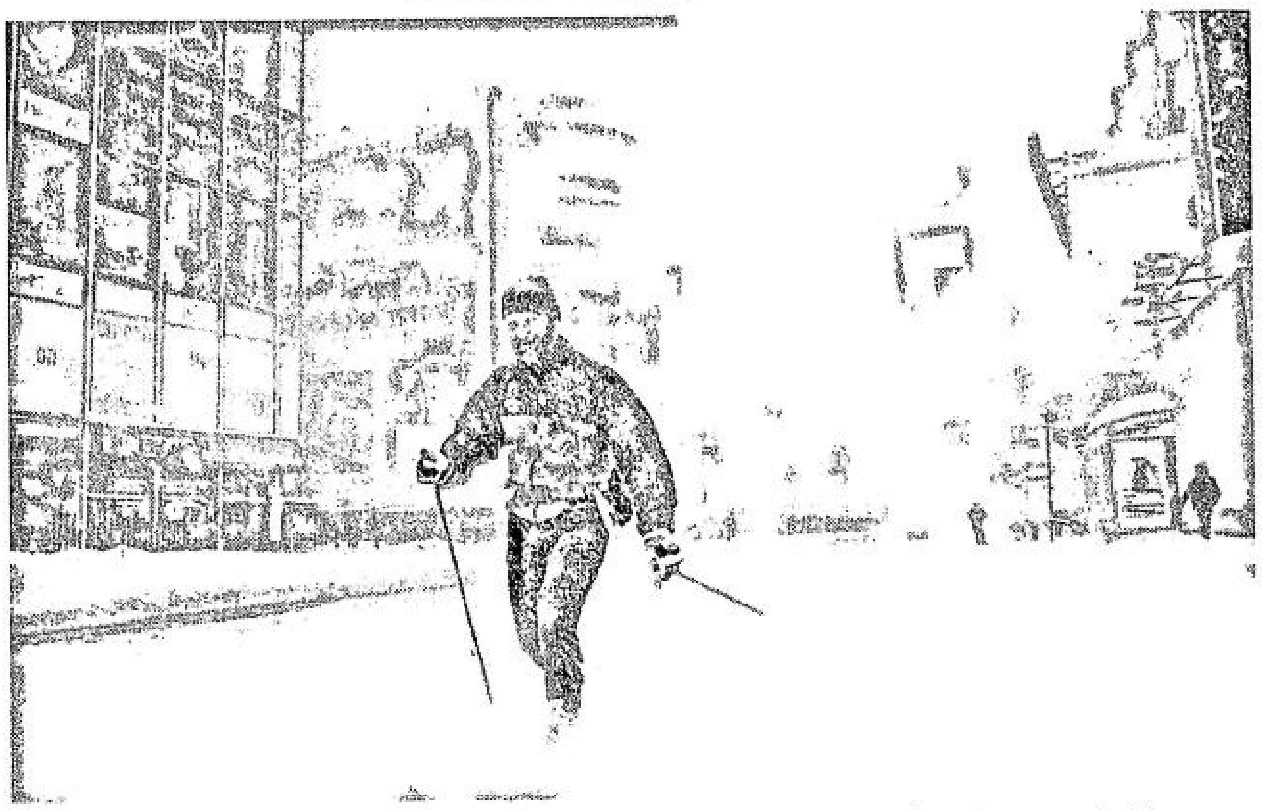
Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's founding father, initially praised Bush's "active policy" toward Iraq. But the city-state has since said it will only decide its position once it is clear that war is inevitable—observers say in part to avoid upsetting its Muslim population.

China, the only Asian country with veto power in the UN Security Council, is also against a rush to war. Beijing—like two other permanent members of the council, France and Russia—favors giving UN weapons inspectors more time.

Even in countries with strong ties to Washington, the divide appears to be widening.

Perhaps the sharpest contrast is in Australia. Hundreds of thousands of chanting, placard-waving people took to the streets of several major cities during the weekend in the biggest peace protests since the Vietnam War—a conflict in which Australians also fought alongside US forces.

The demonstrations directly challenged the policies of Prime Minister John Howard, who has put his country at the forefront of support for Washington. He is sending 2,000 troops to join US and British forces in the Persian Gulf. *AP*



A CROSS-county skier passes through Times Square in New York early Feb. 17 as a winter storm pounded the northeast United States. The storm was expected to leave 18 to 22 in of snow inches New York City, which had 1,300 plows and 148,000 tons of salt ready to clear streets. REUTERS

Blizzard buries northeast US

NEW YORK—The worst blizzard in seven years shut down much of the Northeast on the President's Day holiday with blinding, windblown snow that piled up as much as 1.2 meters (4 ft) deep and left more than a quarter of a million homes and businesses shivering without power.

At least 28 deaths had been blamed on the storm system since it charged out of the Plains during the weekend, piling snow in the Ohio Valley, producing mudslides and floods in the southern Appalachians, and making layers of ice that snapped trees and power lines.

Among those killed was an 83-year-old Pennsylvania man who sought shelter inside his parked car when his home heating system failed. Officials said he died either of hypothermia or carbon monoxide poisoning.

The storm headed for New England, where 43 cm (17 in) of snow fell on Logan International Airport by 8 p.m. Monday, meteorologists said. The western Massachusetts town of Goshen had the most snow with 53 cm (21 in).

The heaviest band of snow was expected to continue blanketing Boston for at least another four hours. Up to 60 cm (2 ft) of snow was expected.

Airports for Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York largely shut down, stranding thousands of passengers trying to leave and get into the region. Amtrak's north-south passenger train service was halted between Washington and Richmond, Virginia, and regional bus service stopped in many areas.

The holiday meant there were few commuters, but police from Kentucky to Massachusetts pleaded with motorists to stay home and some counties banned nonessential travel so they could clear the roads.

"This is going to be days worth of cleanup," said Maryland Highway Administration spokesperson David Buck.

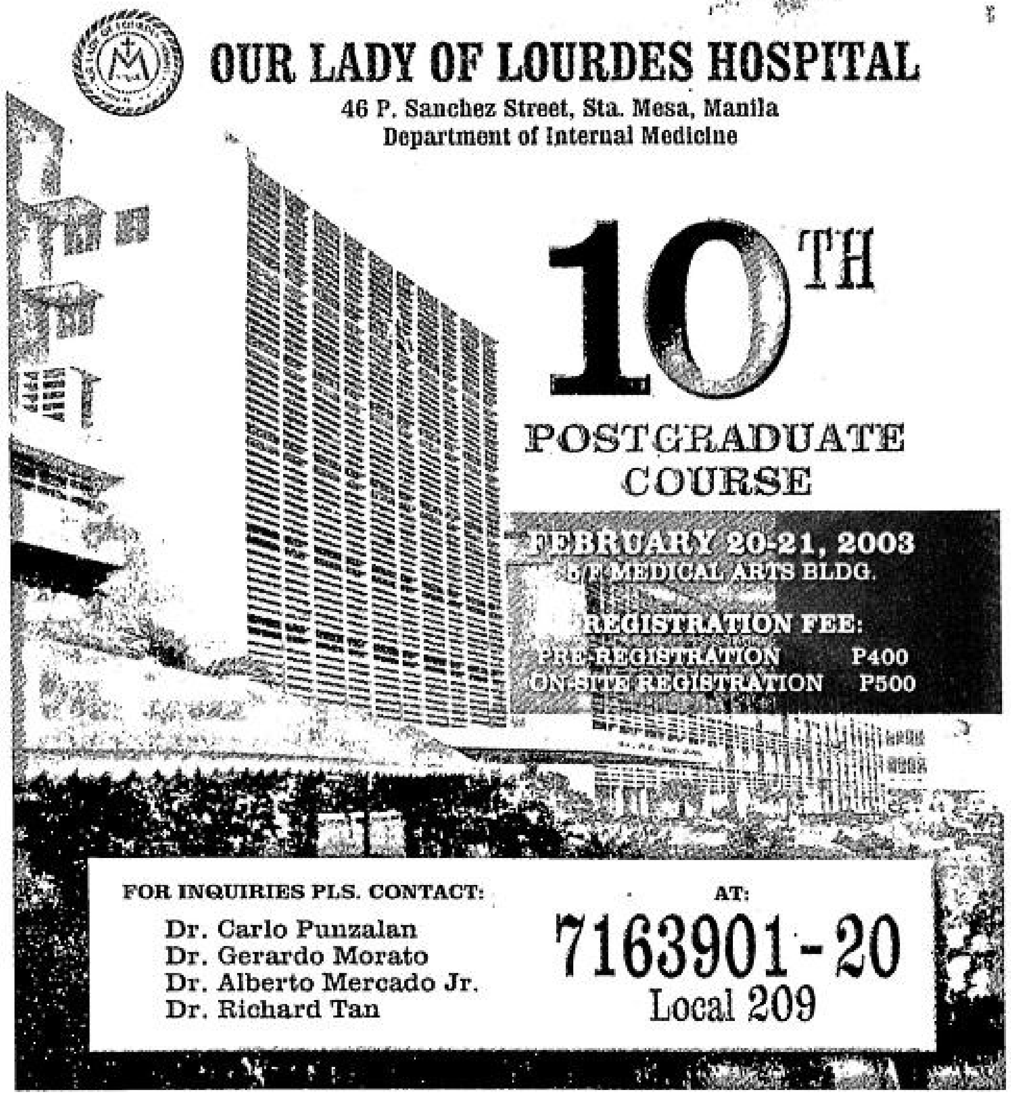
The western tip of Maryland was buried, with 124 cm (49 in) of snow in Garrett County on top of nine-meter (30-ft) drifts left by earlier storms. Area roads, some surrounded by 3.6-meter- (12-ft-) high walls of snow, "look like canals," said Garrett County state highway supervisor Paul McIntyre.

"It's no man's land out there," said McIntyre, whose office window in Keysers Ridge, elevation 870 meters (2,900 ft), was entirely blocked by snow. "It looks more like Siberia than Maryland."

Elsewhere, 69 cm (27 in) fell in West Virginia's Berkeley County, the National Weather Service said. The Seven Springs ski resort area in western Pennsylvania had 102 cm (40 in).

It was one of the worst snowstorms in a century in Washington, where 41 cm (16 in) fell. For the region as a whole, it was the worst snowstorm since the blizzard of 1996, when at least 80 deaths were blamed on the weather.

Among the many travelers stranded by the storm, few were as far from home as Lynn Anderson of Belfast, Ireland. *AP*



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Pikit farmers lose rice, corn fields to war

By Rosa-May V. de Guzman, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

PIKIT, North Cotabato—Over 15,000 hectares of rice and corn fields might have been destroyed by military bombings, according to the Department of Agriculture here.

Maritess Cabico, DA agricultural technologist, said intense fighting between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and government troops took its toll on the province's agricultural productivity. Losses were estimated to have risen to P20 million.

The war on the outskirts of Pikit has turned from bad to worse. Cabico said not only were lives lost, but also whole communities were uprooted.

Cabico said nearly 40,000 evacuees here were afraid to go home despite the military's claim that they had already overrun the MILF's lair in the Buliok Complex.

Farmers in Buliok have been hoping for a good harvest this month.

Samad Alih, 22, who has a four-hectare corn farm, said he would not leave the evacuation center until after the military left his village.

Buliok has at least 219 hectares of corn farms.

"Both forces might have damaged my crops, and there's nothing to harvest," Alih said.

DA officials said they could still not visit the area for fear of getting caught in the crossfire.

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman assured the evacuees of enough food supply and P5,000 shelter assistance.

Soliman said crops left unattended would be immediately salvaged.

Gov. Emmanuel Piñol also pledged to continue his "Plow now Pay Later" program for the small farmers in Pikit.

Livestock farmers also fear of a shortage in livestock because corn from Central Mindanao and in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao would become scarce.

Pikit is the main supplier of corn for Cotabato City and the Davao provinces.

Cabico said another problem was the spread of diseases among carabaos and cattle that have been left unattended by the displaced farmers. The evacuees brought with them only 250 carabaos, 286 heads of cattle, 411 goats and 9,653 fowls.

Cabico said that due to the distressing situation in the evacuation centers, the victims had been selling their goats for only P500 apiece.

The war has brought together efforts of various government and non-government entities in responding to the needs of the evacuees. Due to the magnitude of the crisis, concerted efforts and sharing of resources among the organizations is encouraged, Cabico said.

"Although the government has (given assurance) of enough food supply, reports from the field show there is limited supply of food and medicines. In fact, the officials of Maguindanao have solicited the help of other entities to support the needs of their evacuees," Pikit Disaster Coordinating Council Chair Fr. Bert Layson said.

South Cotabato Gov. Pax Mangudadatu, who visited the evacuation centers on Sunday, brought his mobile hospital for medical and dental services.

On Saturday, a 70-year-old woman died at the Mahad evacuation center, bringing to seven the total number of deaths outside the war zone.

Fatima Manontok died from "shock of war" when the military bombed Buliok, her relatives said.

El Niño ruins ₱32M in crops in Bicol

PILI, Camarines Sur—The El Niño weather phenomenon has started to wreck havoc on Bicol farms this month with crops worth about P32 million damaged so far in this provinces in Sur.

The dry spell has affected 4,839 hectares of land planted to rice, corn and vegetables in 17 towns and cities in the province, according to an El Niño monitoring report of the Department of Agriculture.

Damaged were 4,319 hectares of rain-fed rice farms whose crops were in the seedling to flowering stages, 517 hectares of cornfields, and three hectares of land planted with vegetables.

The DA operations office said the second district of Albay had already shown signs of the El Niño effects with decreasing rainfall level.

It expected most parts of Bicol to be adversely affected at the onset of summer next month.

An intense dry spell would decrease rice harvests in irrigated ricefields as the rainfall level drops and irrigation water supply becomes depleted, it added.

Fe Laysa, DA regional executive director, has reactivated the El Niño Task Force in Bicol, which involves other government agencies and local government units (LGUs).

The agency, along with parallel organizations in the localities, is responsible for enforcing mitigating measures laid down in a contingency plan formulated last year.

The measures included reserved buffer stocks of palay equivalent to the food requirement of Bicol for 15 days, Laysa said.

Laysa said that in the provinces where the damage of the dry spell is expected to become critical, the palay buffer stocks should last 30 days.

She said she had recommended to the LGUs to make use of rice credit facilities available at the National Food Authority (NFA).

They need to sign an agreement with the NFA to avail themselves of the credit facility, she added. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ILOCOS SAND DUNES

Resort investors, residents fight over beachfront areas

By Cristina Arzadon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Conclusion

LAOAG CITY—Things began to shape differently in 2001 when the Hong Kong-based investors formally took over the Fort Ilocandia Resort and Casino operations and embarked on a planned major expansion program covering the foreshore land near the hotel's property.

As tourism promotions focused on the North, the Department of Tourism shifted its sight too at the five-star resort hotel as a major international tourism drawer and its beach site, as a potential investment zone.

During his 2000 visit to Ilocos Norte where he also met with hotel investors, Gordon inspected the Calayab shoreline where the beach structures owned by locals are located.

SPECIAL REPORT

Gordon was quoted as saying that he was displeased at how the shores were dotted with garbage. He said in previous media dialogues: "We have to clear the beach. How can you have a five-star hotel where you have squatters outside? That delays the whole progress of the community."

By 2001, the trend became more clearly defined with the reported plan of the hotel investors to pursue a P400-million expansion program of the beach that would include building concrete structures and a multi-purpose entertainment complex on the beachfront.

Lease applications

In January 2002, the hotel owners filed their foreshore lease applications with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources covering 14 hectares of shores that included the five hectares being occupied by members of the D'Sierto Beach Operators Association.

The hotel's claim to the beachfront areas became ground for Community Environment and Natural Resources Office chief Benjamin Abucay to refuse the renewal of provisional permits he had issued to the association members.

"Since the hotel has a claim to the beachfront, we no longer accepted the payments (of establishment owners) for fear that the hotel management will get back at us," Abucay said.

He said permits have been previously issued because the hotel, under previous management, did not claim its rights to the beachfront.

He cited a guideline under the foreshore lease permit that priority "should be given to the riparian owner which is the hotel developers."

"One who owns a property along the beach has the priority to apply and develop properties adjacent to its area," Abucay noted.

The Fort Ilocandia Property Holdings and Development Corp. (FIPHDC) then prepared the groundwork for the purpose by asserting its supposed right on the foreshore property where the association sits, including four hectares of privately-owned seaside property that runs next to the association's occupied land.

Rightful owner

The adjacent seashore property was decided as rightfully owned by lawyer Ladislao Ruiz, owner of the Northshore Beach Resort, in a court case in 1990.

The Philippine Tourism Authority, which was then running the hotel, earlier claimed ownership of Ruiz's property but the court ruled that his property is outside of the hotel.

Before it formally assumed the hotel operations in 2001, the FIPHDC conducted a relocation survey in July 2000 on its property.

The survey results showed that a portion of the foreshore land had been encroached upon by the association's beach structures.

Association members immediately contested the validity of the survey noting that the geodetic engineer, Rodolfo Jose, who surveyed the hotel property, was the same official who certified in 1992 that the areas they were occupying did not encroach on the hotel property.

Jose also submitted a handwritten certification that the members of the D'Sierto and Northshore owners were present during the survey. The certification, however, bore no signatures of the establishment owners.

The hotel owners initially offered P650,000 to each establishment owner along with a guarantee that they would be accommodated as concessionaires in the proposed multi-purpose complex in exchange for their voluntary withdrawal from the area.

The financial settlement was contained in a letter received by fax at the city mayor's office. Mayor Roger Fariñas interceded on behalf of the hotel owners and offered the settlement.

Petition

Instead of accepting the offer, the members filed a petition in February 2002 with the DENR regional office asking to declare the hotel's relocation survey invalid.

They also asked the DENR to declare them as the rightful occupants of the foreshore areas they have been occupying for nearly two decades.

"We are not for sale. Our land is not for sale. Mayor Fariñas should protect the welfare of his constituents and not the interest of foreign investors," Fredalyn Buyat, D'Sierto Beach Operators Association president, said.

"Shouldn't our government uphold the rights of its own people? We understand the importance of development in community progress but we ask our officials, development for whom?

"We will never give up what rightfully belongs to us. We have invested almost 20 years of our lives here. All our properties have been sold to be able to raise our businesses. What will happen to us and our children's children if we give up this land?"

Buyat said residents built and rebuilt dozens of wooden cottages that were constantly torn down when strong typhoons hit the province.

"Count how many typhoons have come around since the 1980s and that's how many times we have rebuilt these cottages," Buyat said.

But in its decision in May 2002, the DENR ruled in favor of the hotel owners and rejected the individual foreshore lease agreements of the association members.

Riparian owner

Victor Ancheta, regional DENR director, used the provision on the preference of a riparian owner under an administrative order to support his decision.

A section of the administrative order states that "the owner of the property adjoining shore or marshy lands covered with water bordering upon the shores or banks of navigable lakes or rivers shall be given preference to apply for such lands adjoining his property . . ."

"Clearly, there is no question that Fort Ilocandia is the riparian owner. Preference is therefore given to it by regulation to apply for the foreshore land under controversy. Hence, its application should be given preference and due course over any other applications," Ancheta wrote in his decision.

Interestingly, hotel owners only filed their lease agreements for a 14-hectare seashore area with the DENR in 2002 while the local beach operators filed theirs as early as 1992.

The hotel filed a separate lease agreement for an eight-hectare foreshore land also in 1992. But Cenro records showed that the hotel management had reneged on their obligations to pay rental fees since 1992.

In a letter to Abucay, then hotel manager Christopher Parks refused to pay the corresponding dues for the eight-hectare lease agreement on the ground that the previous management under the Polar Peak Philippines incurred these.

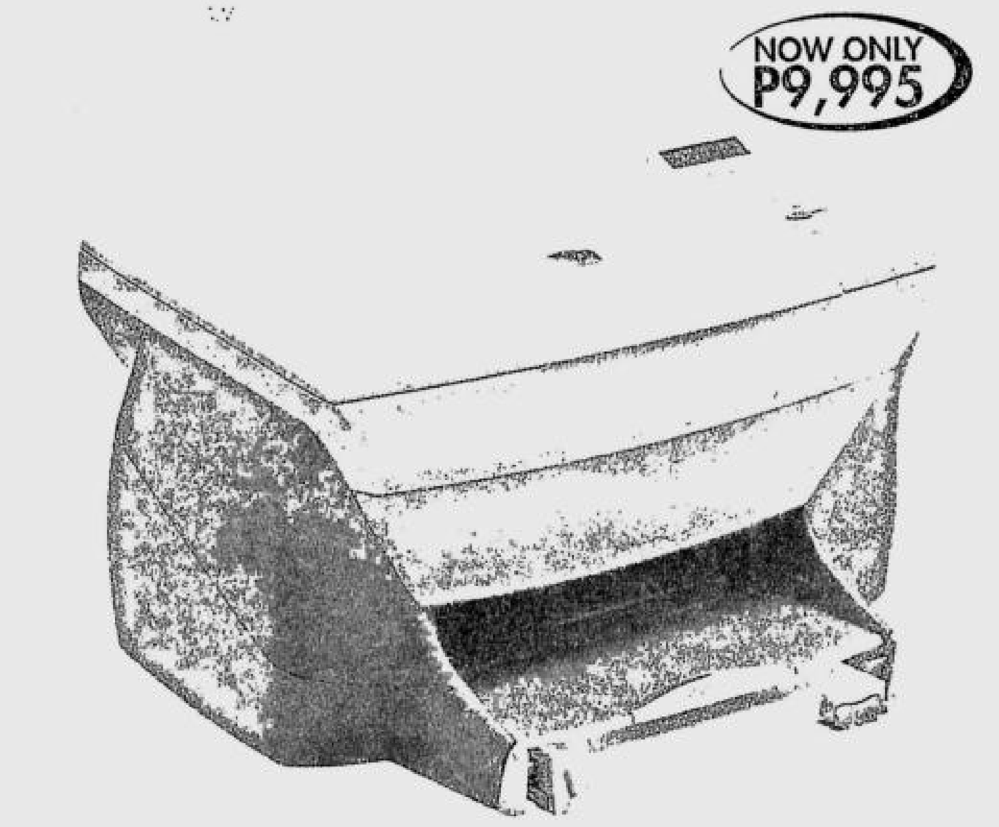
Final disposition

Lawyer Da Vinci Crisostomo, also Ilocos Norte provincial board member who represents the local beach operators, had elevated his clients' petition to Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun for final disposition.

"Granting that the hotel has riparian rights, how about the residents who have improved and invested in that area for almost two decades, don't they have the right under the law?" Crisostomo asked.

"And what is the logic of granting them (hotel owners) a new lease agreement when they failed to develop foreshore lands which they previously applied for and without paying taxes to the government?" he said.

"Until all remedies have been exhausted, the residents can stay in that land until the court of last resort declares that they don't have the right to occupy the area."



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Invest firm's staff also scam victims

By Ansbert Joaquin
PDI Central Luzon Desk

OLONGAPO CITY—The chief of the Tibayan Group Investment Co. Inc. (TGICI) extension office here said members of his staff plan to file a joint complaint against TGICI, claiming they also have placed investments that run in several millions of pesos in the company.

In a phone interview, Eliseo de la Fuente, TGICI chief here, said he was in Manila to find out where to properly file the complaint against TGICI to recover his and his family's investments worth about P20 million.

De la Fuente said all employees in the firm's branch inside the Subic Bay Freeport, including their relatives, had invested in TGICI.

De la Fuente said the number of investors from Olongapo City and Subic, Zambales, alone would be between 300 and 500, with investments that would reach about P250 million.

The NBI received complaints from only 23 people, with combined investments worth P13 million.

The biggest investors, De la Fuente said, are the members of the TGICI office staff themselves.

He said his family alone invested P9.8 million.

When he was still earning from interests, De la Fuente said he had convinced his relatives to invest more than P10 million.

ROUNDUP

NPA rebel nabbed

DAVAO CITY—A New People's Army rebel was killed while another was wounded in an encounter with government troops in New Corella, Davao del Norte on Monday. But reports reaching the regional police office have yet to identify the slain and wounded rebels. Soldiers of the Army's 72nd Infantry Battalion were on combat patrol at around 11:30 a.m. when they chanced upon more than 30 rebels in Sitio Magsaysay in Barangay Patrocenio, New Corella. The gunfight lasted 45 minutes. The rebels withdrew and fled, leaving behind their dead and wounded comrades, the report said.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Fire volunteer killed

DAVAO CITY—A fire volunteer was killed when the truck he was riding in figured in an accident along the national highway in Barangay Matti, Digos City on Monday. Jay Pahusal was with three others on board the fire truck of the Filipino-Chinese Volunteers Fire Brigade to respond to a fire at the back of the Davao del Sur provincial capitol, when the vehicle's brakes malfunctioned as it was negotiating a curve. The driver and the three fire volunteers jumped off the truck and suffered minor injuries. Pahusal leaped to the right side where the truck was headed for, knocking him off.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Ex-cop held in drug bust

DAVAO CITY—A man who claimed to be a former member of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao police was arrested in an anti-illegal drugs operation here on Sunday afternoon. Ali Pamlian of Barangay 23-C here reportedly delivered two shabu sachets to a policeman who led the buy-bust operation at around 4 p.m. Sunday. Pamlian, 28, is now facing charges before the City Prosecutor's Office.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Grenade found

COTABATO CITY—A grenade placed inside a paper box was discovered Monday night inside the newly constructed market complex here. Police said the explosive contained a note threatening city market administrator Sam Mundas. "Your days are numbered and this (grenade) is just a sample," the note, written in Filipino, said. Mundas, however, laughed off the threat, saying it came from people who were against his enforcement of a law against illegal vending. Mundas challenged Barangay Poblacion 6 officials to help police identify the culprit who, he said, might as well count his remaining days. Mundas admitted to have received several death threats when he led the police and city engineering personnel in demolishing illegal structures along sidewalks and streets that were causing traffic congestion in the city's public markets.

Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Meat blockade

BATANGAS CITY—Although the three-day meat blockade by the Agriculture Sector Alliance of the Philippines (Asap) did not entirely paralyze the selling of meat in Metro Manila, representatives from the group said it was successful in making the Macapagal administration realize that the local hog industry was dying and that it should address the problem. The meat blockade on Feb. 6-9 was meant to draw the attention of President Macapagal-Arroyo, the Department of Agriculture and the people "that ours is a dying industry due to massive meat importation and smuggling," Soro-soro Ibaba Development Cooperative Inc. chair Dr. Lito Bagui said. Another Asap officer said more meat blockades would be mounted.

Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

UP Mindanao confab

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines Alumni Association of Davao (UPAA-Davao) Chapter and the UP in Mindanao are organizing and hosting the 26th Regional Alumni Institute (RAI) on Feb. 28 to March 1 at the Grand Men Seng, Pichon Street in Davao City. Ricardo Ma. Nolasco, vice chancellor for academic affairs of UP in Mindanao, said in a news release that the event was in time with the anniversary celebration of the youngest constituent university in the UP System. Among the speakers expected are former Education Secretary Raul Roco, Senators Franklin Drilon and Edgardo Angara, Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Farouk Hussein and former Sen. Vicente Paterno. For details, interested parties were told to call the UPAA-Davao Secretariat at (082) 222-8297 or (082) 2213196, e-mail at upaadavao@yahoo.com, or visit the Secretariat Office on the 2nd Floor, UP Mindanao Building, Anda and Rizal Streets, Davao City.

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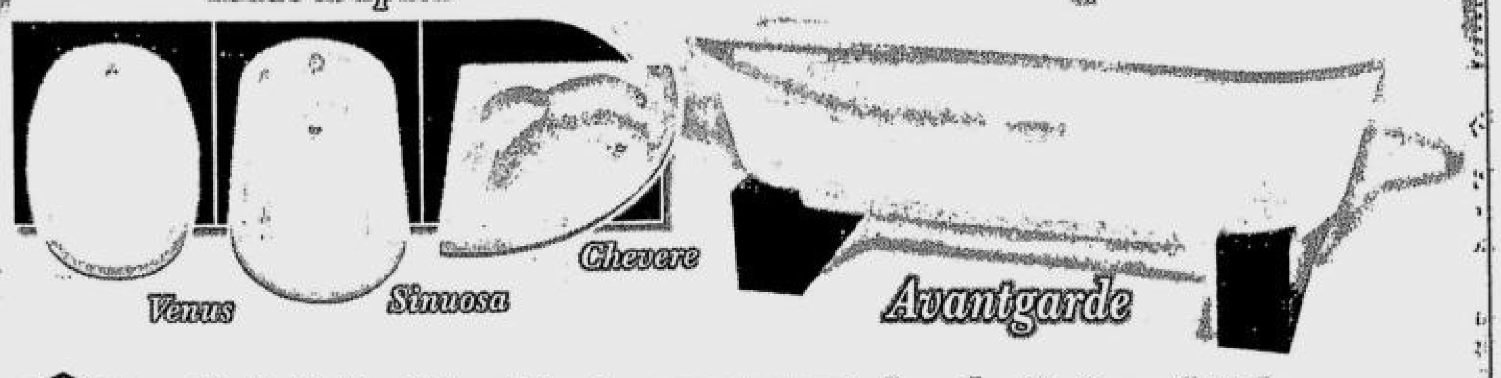

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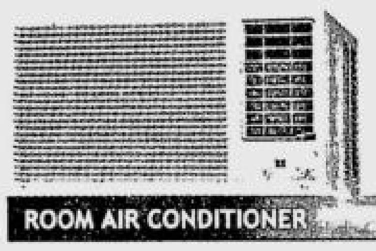

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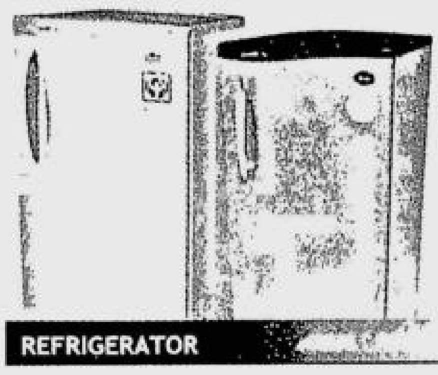

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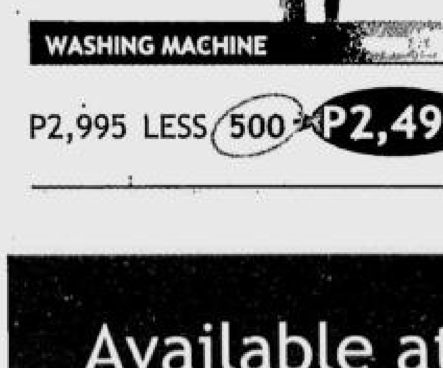

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon
Editor Jun Bandayrel ❖ Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Tapping investors to save terraces

By Maurice Malanes
Banaue, Ifugao

LIKE planting rice and building terraces, getting funds to help save the threatened Ifugao rice terraces, the world's eighth wonder, is no fun.

This, despite the rice terraces' inscription as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) in 1995 and the terraces' inclusion in Unesco's "endangered list" in December 2001.

As a signatory to the 1985 World Heritage Convention, the government is duty-bound to help save the world's only living cultural heritage site now threatened by forest depletion, soil erosion, dwindling water supply, lack of supplemental local livelihood opportunities, out-migration and land conversion.

But Ifugao folk and officials can hardly expect much from a cash-strapped national government. They cannot rely on traditional fund sources such as internal revenue allotments and legislators' countrywide development funds.

But hope is not lost on the Ifugao people. Like the creative Ifugao ancestors who built the rice terraces 10 to 20 centuries ago, the current crop of provincial officials is resorting to unconventional but innovative means to generate concrete support to help save the terraces.

For Ifugao officials, time is running out for all concerned, even the non-Ifugao, to help save the terraces, which are said to have shrunk by half from 15,000 hectares 50 years ago.

Donors' forum

The latest innovative scheme, which provincial officials launched on Feb. 11-13, was the "Ifugao Investment Matching Expedition" at the Banaue Hotel in Banaue, Ifugao.

"This (matching expedition) is actually a donors' forum," said Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. "It is our attempt to tap non-traditional sources of funding to restore the rice terraces."

The expedition aimed to bring target donors and investors to see first-hand the situation of the rice terraces so they could look into what program of intervention on which they could invest their money or expertise.

To help facilitate the investment matching process, the provincial government prepared various project proposals based on an updated strategic master plan for the restoration of the terraces.

Nine major investment areas have been listed. These included mapping and monitoring fault lines and volcanic centers, improving rice crop yield and terraces land-use zoning, restoring watersheds, improving irrigation and tapping new irrigation sources, developing appropriate transport access, and tapping new and renewable energy sources for rural electrification.

The other areas are land-use planning and developing rice-terrace-enhancing tourism, preserving and enhancing positive cultural values and practices, creating sustainable livelihoods, nutrition and health and education, and organizing and training communities on various skills and expertise.

Every investment area seeks to help address the various problems threatening the rice terraces. Creating local sustainable livelihood opportunities through rural electrification and improving transport access, for example, aims to address the out-migration phenomenon so Ifugao folk would stay to maintain their terraces.

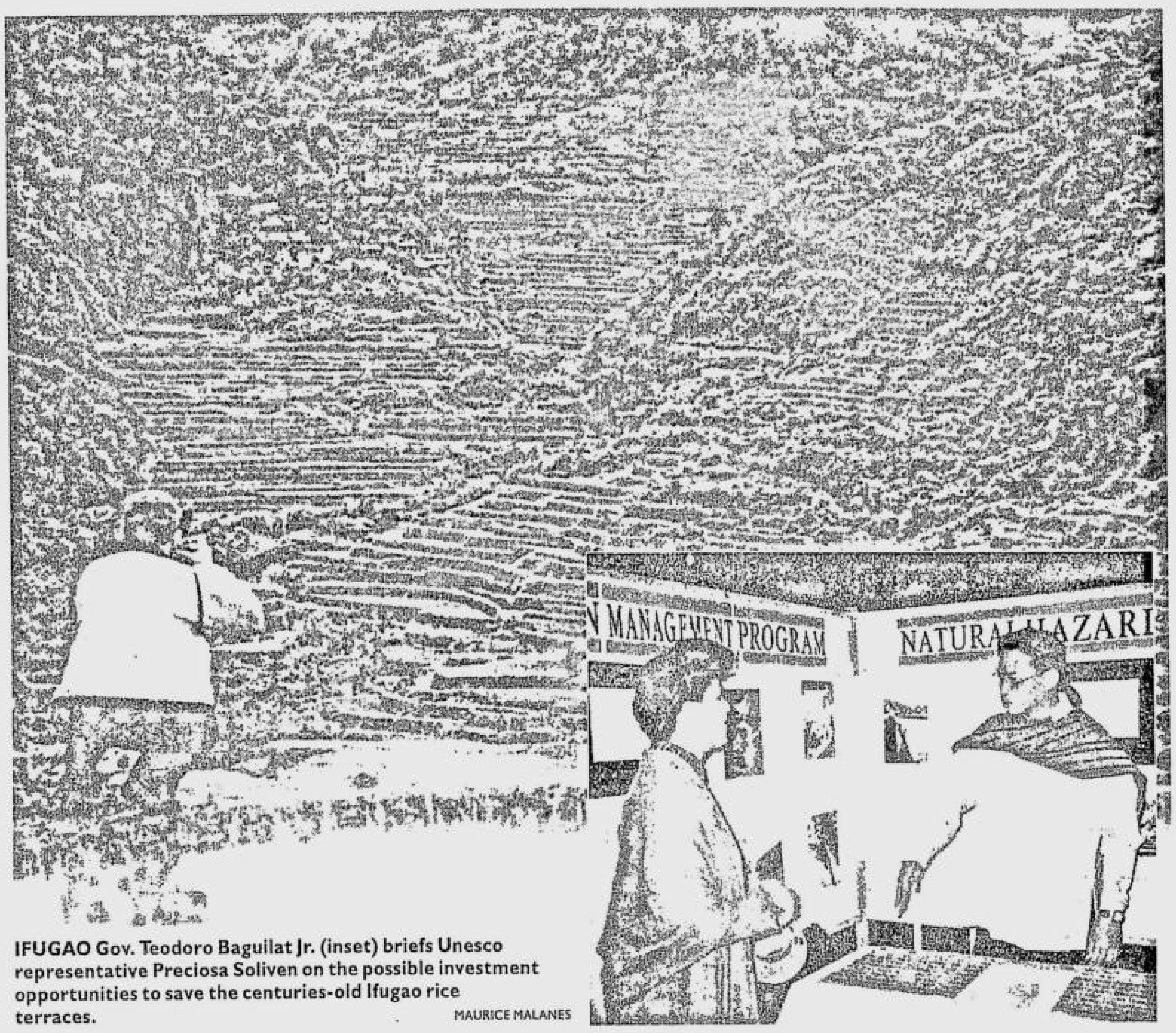
"'Hard' investments, such as infrastructure, are as vital as 'soft' investments, such as health and nutrition because, as our health officers have pointed, farmers cannot work productively in the terraces if they are not healthy," Baguilat said.

He stressed that all the major investment areas actually seek to address three basic integral components of the save-the-rice-terraces drive—culture, environment and people.

"Culture, because rice terrace farming is a way of life; environment, because the water and watersheds, which sustain the rice terraces, are part of a bigger ecosystem; and people because they are the stakeholders," he said.

First in Ifugao

The first in the province, if not in the Cordillera, the investment matching expedition gathered potential investors, donors and nongovernment organizations, which could invest not necessarily money, but also technical expertise and training.



IFUGAO Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. (inset) briefs Unesco representative Preciosa Soliven on the possible investment opportunities to save the centuries-old Ifugao rice terraces.
MAURICE MALANES

Unesco representative, Dr. Preciosa Soliven, the matching expedition's guest, promised to send water experts to help upgrade local irrigation systems and restore watersheds.

A representative from the Manila-based Foundation for a Sustainable Society Inc. promised to invest on projects that could help prevent soil erosion.

A Foundation for Philippine Environment (FPE) representative disclosed that Ifugao nongovernment and people's organizations (NGOs and POs that are FPE's clients) could access a maximum of P150,000 per project proposal for seminars and training and research related to biodiversity conservation.

For his part, Wendell Acena of the nongovernment La Liga Policy Institute said his institute could help Ifugao local governments, NGOs and POs write project proposals. He said La Liga could help link up with possible donors who could help support the movement to save the terraces.

Representatives from the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement and the Institute of Popular Democracy (IPD) also offered help in the form of training, community organizing and research.

With 2003 declared the International Year of Fresh Water by the UN, IPD's Roberto Soriano said he would help link up with possible donors who could fund research on water and electricity.

Nova Clotario-Concepcion, Smart Communications public affairs officer, said she would relay to her superiors the request of Ifugao officials for a donation of a relay tower, which the people can use in setting up a radio station.

The province has yet to have its own radio station, which, Philippine Information Agency provincial manager Vivencia Bulayugan said, was needed to help in the information drive to preserve the rice terraces.

Representatives of various government agencies, such as the departments of energy, environment, agriculture, agrarian reform, health, tourism and public works and highways, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, National Irrigation Administration, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and the National Power Corp. also offered pledges.

Ifugao officials have no illusion that they can immediately tap donors and investors in just one investment matching expedition and investments will flow immediately into the province like water.

"This (recent matching expedition) is just the start of a process," said Baguilat. A similar activity will be held on Feb. 27-28, he said.

Is Mt. Pulag the country's second highest mountain?

By Desiree Caluza
Baguio City

A GROUP of mountaineers is disputing the classification of Mt. Pulag in Benguet as the second highest peak in the country, according to an official of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

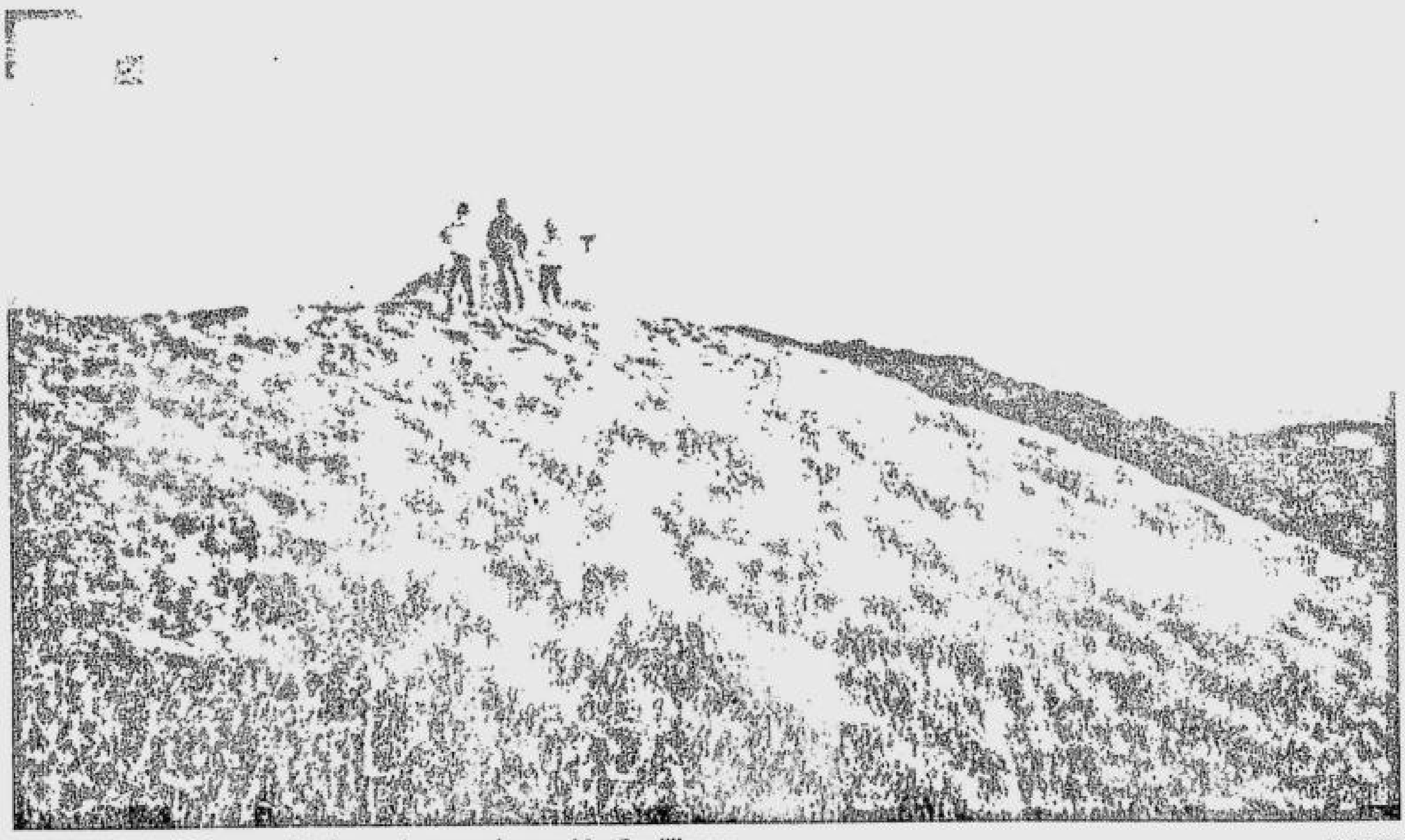
DAYTOY TI AMIANAN

Emerita Tamiray, park superintendent of the Mt. Pulag National Park, said the Metropolitan Mountaineering Society of the Philippines (MMSP), a group that conducts conservation activities, considered the 9,637-foot (2,937.35-meter) Mt. Dulang-Dulang in the Kitanglad mountain ranges in Bukidnon as the second highest mountain in the country. The MMSP said Pulag stood only at 9,610 ft (2,929.128 m).

Mt. Apo in Cotabato is the highest mountain with an elevation of 9,689 ft (2,953.2 m).

But Roy Adeva, coordinator of the INQUIRER Mountaineering Club, said the classification of Dulang-Dulang and the peaks in the Kitanglad mountain ranges as the second highest in the country was not new within mountaineering circles.

The rankings of the top 10 peaks in the country can be found at www.geocities.com./siba_ph/PhilPeaks.html, according to officials of the DENR's Protected Areas and Wildlife Division (PAWD).



MT. PULAG, the highest peak in Luzon, is a sacred ground for Cordillerans.
PDI PHOTO

Tamiray said the MMSP based the rankings on the readings of the Global Positioning System (GPS), a satellite aided instrument used in measuring mountain peaks.

However, the MMSP findings can still be disputed because GPS readings can be inaccurate, especially when readings are taken during a very cloudy environment, she said.

"The disparity between the two mountains (Pulag and Dulang-Dulang) is less than 50 meters and we also have to consider the percentage of error of the instrument. Whether Pulag ranks third, it can still boast of having one of the best natural beauty," Tamiray said.

Leo Viray, PAWD chief, said mountaineering groups should not rely on the GPS readings.

"There are GPS instruments that cost P10,000 and there are those that cost P100,000. Now, which would you believe if they give you a different reading?" Viray asked.

The MMSP list, however, did not dispute Pulag's stature as the highest peak in Luzon.

Playground of gods

The Ibaloi and Kalanguya peoples consider Pulag, also called the "playground of the gods," a sacred place where spirits of their ancestors stay.

Tamiray said a fresh profiling of mountains in the Philippines should be conducted to update mountaineers, conservationists and environment officials.

"One of the things that should be raised is the profiling of the mountains using a uniform device so we can have an official ranking of mountains in the country. This should be done by the government and not really the mountaineers," she said.

For the Kalanguya tribe, however, Pulag's actual height is not an issue, said Gáspar Cayat, president of the Kalanguya Tribal Congress Association.

"[Elevation] is not the basis why we look at Mt. Pulag as our sacred ground, it was just incidental that it was one of the highest (mountains in the country). Whether it ranks second, third or fourth, it doesn't matter because what we believe in is that this is the place of our gods," Cayat said.

Cesar Chong, vice president for technical services of the Cordillera Mountaineering Club (CMC), said it was impractical to dispute Pulag's ranking because its status as the second highest mountain has already been acknowledged.

Chong said it would take "a lot of money, time and effort" to prove that Dulang-Dulang is higher than Pulag. He said Pulag's height was last recorded in the 1970s by Baguio-based American soldiers. That record is kept in the archives of Camp John Hay, he said.

Joel Belinan, vice president for administration of CMC, said the DENR should confirm Pulag's elevation to settle the issue.

"But what is important is Mt. Pulag remains in the top five (highest peaks) and their distances do not differ much," Belinan said.

The MMSP list classifies Apo, Dulang-Dulang and Pulag as among the "9,000-footers." Joining these mountains in the list are Mt. Kitanglad in the Kitanglad mountain ranges at 9,509 ft (2,898.34 m); Mt. Tabayac in Benguet at 9,322 ft (2,841.34 m); and Mt. Piapayungan in Mindanao at 9,233 ft (2,814.21 m).

MILF launches counterattacks; 16 soldiers dead

From page A1

fantry Battalion headquarters in Kauswagan, Lanao del Sur.

About 50 rebels also attacked a military detachment in Datu Piang, Maguindanao, at about the same time, but no one was reported hurt.

At around 11 a.m., another group of rebels ambushed a military truck in Matanog, Maguindanao, killing seven government troops and wounding 11 others.

In all the attacks, Kabalu said, only one MILF rebel was killed while "none was wounded."

Kabalu said the slain MILF member was one of those who launched the Kauswagan attack.

"This is part of the MILF's active defense. Ground commanders were given the autonomy to decide and execute action suited to their respective localities but with one major condition: civilians should be spared," Kabalu said.

Lanao del Sur-based MILF leader Abdurahman Macapaar, alias Commander Bravo, told the INQUIRER over the telephone that he led yesterday's attack in Kauswagan. "We hit many soldiers. I'm just not sure about the body count," Macapaar said in Filipino.

Top Mindanao generals confirmed the Matanog ambush.

Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga, 6th Infantry Division commander, said the soldiers in Matanog were on their way to secure an Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao program.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya said the ambush also left 10 soldiers and a civilian wounded.

More clashes

Senga hinted that yesterday's attacks could trigger more military operations against the MILF.

"The MILF has been claiming that they are in the defensive position but it's the reverse," Senga said, adding: "But we've been expecting actions from them."

Kabalu said the Armed Forces was targetting the upper portion of Camp Abubakar next. He explained that the military had failed to penetrate the area—part of what was then the MILF's main camp—during the "all-out war" declared by President Joseph Estrada in 2000.

But Senga said Kabalu was only inviting trouble.

"He announced over the radio that the military will attack the MILF in Pikit prior to the operations . . . Now he is doing it again," Senga said, saying Kabalu was giving the AFP ideas about the MILF's buildup of forces.

But Senga also said the gradual exodus of residents from Matanog, Buldon and Barira towns in Maguindanao had already caught the AFP's attention.

He said the evacuation was due to many sightings of a heavy concentration of MILF rebels in the area.

Senga said that there was indeed a massing of MILF forces in the Matanog-Buldon-Barira complex, known also as Iranon area.

"We are closely monitoring the MILF presence in this area and all other parts of Mindanao which is under my coverage area," he said.

Over a hundred evacuees from Matanog showed up in Parang, Maguindanao yesterday, looking for temporary shelter.

But Parang Mayor Vivencio Bataga denied the evacuees the use of public schools, saying their occupancy would also displace schoolchildren.

Maj. Julieto Ando, 6th ID spokesperson, told the INQUIRER that the Narciso Ramos Highway that connects Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur was also "temporarily closed" to traffic.

Ando said elements of the 64th Infantry Battalion and some Marine soldiers were protecting the highway, the site of fierce fighting in 2000, from possible MILF attacks.

Peace talks

Kabalu said that despite the continuing skirmishes, the MILF remained open to the prospect of resuming peace negotiations.

But he said government troops should be pulled out of Buliok complex—a demand immediately rejected by both Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and chief negotiator Eduardo Ermita.

"The MILF is open to (suggestions) of resuming peace talks, but we are observing developments," Kabalu said. "There should be sincerity and commitment from the government with respect to the peace process."

Ermita welcomed the MILF gesture but said troops would remain in the area to clear it of land mines allegedly planted by the rebels. He told reporters he was hopeful the stalled talks would resume based on a text message supposedly sent by a member of the MILF central committee to a government official the other day.

He added that Malaysia was still willing to facilitate the peace negotiations as it had done before.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has not yet approved the final peace agreement that the government would offer the MILF. The Cabinet oversight committee on internal security endorsed the document to her on Feb. 12, the same day she gave the order to capture Buliok. *With reports from Grace Cantal-Albasin and Joselle R. Badilla, and Charlie C. Senase and Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Dona Pazzibugan; AFP; and Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

North Korea threatens . . .

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North Korea "will be left with no option but to take a decisive step to abandon its commitment to implement the Armistice Agreement . . . and free itself from the binding force of all its provisions," said the unidentified spokesperson, quoted by the North's state-run KCNA news agency.

But South Korean and US officials saw no immediate indication that North Korea planned to launch a serious attack across the border. Armed forces of the two Koreas were in the middle of their annual winter training.

Even if Tuesday's announcement was largely symbolic, any change in the armistice—the only existing legal instrument keeping an uneasy peace on the peninsula—could greatly increase tensions and uncertainty.

The threat was the latest North Korean move in an international dispute over its suspected nuclear weapons development.

Recent decisions by North Korea to restart its nuclear facilities and withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty have been widely viewed as attempts to increase tension, and pressure Washington into direct negotiations on a nonaggression pact. The impoverished North is also desperate for food and energy aid.

The North has long been undermining the armistice, calling it a "useless scrap of paper." It has refused to participate in armistice commission talks.

Maj. Ha Ju-yeon, a spokesperson at the South Korean defense ministry, said there were no unusual movements by North Korean troops on Tuesday along the 240-km border.

The winter training for both Korean militaries began last December. But North Korea suffers acute fuel shortages, and its military's winter maneuverings have been less vigorous in recent years, Ha said.

"I think there is little or no risk of war on the Korean Peninsula," South Korean President Kim Dae-jung was quoted as saying by his spokesperson, Park Sun-sook.

Kim called for direct dialogue between the United States and North Korea, saying such talks were crucial to international efforts to bring a diplomatic end to the dispute.

The US military announced on Monday that it would conduct two joint exercises with South Korea next month, although it said the annual maneuvers were not related to the nuclear dispute with North Korea.

North Korea has denounced past joint US-South Korea maneuvers as preparations for an invasion.

The North Korean threat was issued Monday by the spokesperson of the North Korean military's mission to Panmunjom, a truce village where the American-led UN Command and the North Korean military meet to oversee the armistice. KCNA did not release the statement until Tuesday morning.

The UN Command, which supervises the southern half of the Demilitarized Zone between the two Koreas, had no immediate comment on the North Korean statement. *AP*

GIs in Jolo 'provocative'

From page A1

an anti-US sentiment among Muslims," Villar said. "The presence of US soldiers might provoke many Muslims in the area. We should consider that it will heighten tensions."

Jolo Vice Mayor Delma Ynawat said the US troops "must justify their purpose in coming here."

But in Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye insisted that Balikatan 03-1—its objective being the rout of the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu—"will exclusively be a training exercise."

Still, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a former chief of staff of the Armed Forces, expressed concern over possible armed encounters between Abu Sayyaf bandits and US soldiers accompanying Filipino troops.

"By holding the joint training in a combat zone, we are rendering ourselves vulnerable to the possibility that US forces will be involved in combat operations," Biazon told the INQUIRER.

In Zamboanga City, no one among the Southern Command brass was willing to talk about the military exercise that will allegedly start in August.

Southcom chief Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya told the INQUIRER that he was not in a position to comment on the matter.

Even 1st Tabak Division commander Maj. Gen. Glicerio Sua, who supervises military operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu, refused to talk. "It's not at my level to talk about that. It's [at the level of] the policy-makers up there," he said.

Abaya said the Southcom had received word on the joint exercise, "but there are no ground rules yet to discuss, as far as I know, there are still no Terms of Reference."

Bunye said the US military personnel participating in Balikatan 03-1 would serve only as trainers or advisers to Filipino soldiers.

"They are not combat soldiers, and a large component of this exercise is civic action," he said.

From Basilan to Sulu

At a briefing by defense and foreign affairs officials for Villar's committee, Foreign Undersecretary Lauro Baja Jr. said the "training, advice and assistance" rendered by the Americans in last year's Balikatan 02-01 were "the contributing factors that led to the defeat of the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan."

Baja said Balikatan 03-1 would "maximize" these factors "to bring the remaining members of the Abu Sayyaf to justice and end once and for all their terrorist activities."

Asked by Biazon why the training exercise would be held in Sulu, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said the island "still has the remnants of the Abu Sayyaf."

"They left Basilan and went to Sulu," Reyes said.

General Sua earlier said in Zamboanga that it would be better to take the joint military exercises "where the conflict is," in order to immediately address whatever would be required in the event of actual encounters with the Abu Sayyaf while on training.

Sua said the US soldiers were already aware of the situation in Sulu. "I believe that they know why they are going there, and they have to prepare for it," he said. "Otherwise they will postpone it."

He said the people of Sulu would get more out of Balikatan 03-1 than what the people of Basilan enjoyed in Balikatan 02-1. He was referring to the Americans' humanitarian assistance as well as the infrastructure that they helped build in Basilan.

The four top commanders of the Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf who have reportedly moved to Sulu are Khadaffy Janjalani, Isnilon Hapilon, Jainal Antel Sali alias Abu Sulaiman and Bakal Hapilon.

The known leaders of the bandit group already in Sulu are Radulan Sahiron, Galib Andang alias Kumander Robot, Mujib Susukan, Doctor Abu and Abu Jumdail.

Sahiron is still holding captive Indonesians Jul Kipli, Muntu Jacobus Winowatan and Pieter Lerrich, who were abducted in June last year, and four Filipino women—Jehovah's Witnesses members Nori Bendijo, Emily Mantic, Florida Montulo and Cleofe Montulo.

No difference

Bunye said Balikatan 03-1 would "not differ" from Balikatan 02-1.

The latter involved some 1,200 US troops, including Green Berets, and was held from January to July last year. The supposed killing of Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya in a sea encounter off the coast of Zamboanga del Norte occurred in June.

Bunye said Filipino and US troops participating in Balikatan 03-1, which he described as "part of our continuing commitment to joint military training programs to sharpen our capability to deal with terrorist threats," would "operate under Philippine commanders."

"Our troops will hone their skills in modern techniques using modern weapons," he said.

Reyes said in a chance interview at Camp Aguinaldo that he was in favor of forging new Terms of Reference (TOR) for Balikatan 03-1.

"There are two schools of thought here—one saying there is no need, the other saying it might be better to have a new set so that it would be clear to everybody just exactly what is to be done. I would think there is no harm in having a new set," he said.

Bunye said Monday that Malacañang planned to use for the forthcoming exercise the previous TOR that governed Balikatan 02-1.

But during the briefing at the Senate, Biazon said a new TOR should be formulated. *Reports from AFP; Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Gerald G. Lacuarta, Carlito Pablo, Martin P. Marfil and TJ Burgonio in Manila*

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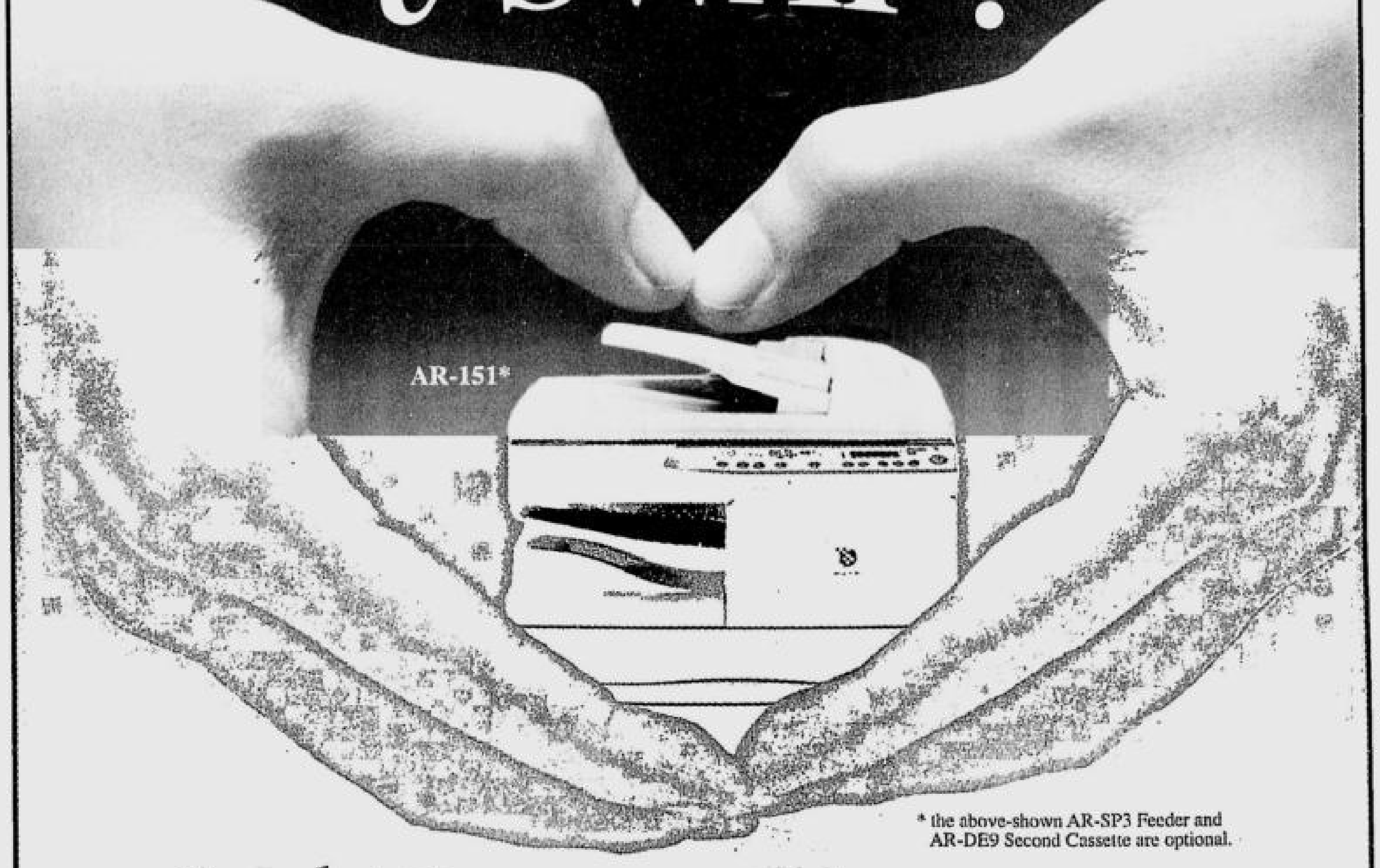

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Malacañang finds fuel price increases 'reasonable'

By Dona Pazzibugan and Ronnel W. Domingo

MALACAÑANG finds the latest round of fuel price increases "reasonable" but militant labor and transport groups claim that it was excessive.

The conflicting assessments came after consumer welfare advocate Raul Concepcion demanded that the Big Three explain why they raised fuel prices 29 to 39 centavos more than they should this month.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said yesterday that the Department of Energy (DOE) had found that the price increases were reasonable given the rising oil prices in the world market due to the impending war in the Middle East.

Oil companies have even delayed their increases "up to the last minute" upon the DOE's request, according to Bunye.

"We see that that the oil companies are also cooperating, but they are really affected by the (rising) prices in the world market and these really could not be helped," he said.

Last weekend's round of price increases was fourth in six weeks.

Instead of raising prices, the oil firms should cut the price of gasoline by P4.22 per liter and that of diesel by P3.46 per liter, according to the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU).

Elmer Labog, KMU secretary general, said the Big Three's reasons—rising crude and import costs—for raising prices did not hold water.

"(Petron, Pilipinas Shell and Caltex Philippines) have used countless worn-out alibis and lame excuses to justify their price hikes," Labog said in an interview. "Now they are using the continuing threat of a US war against Iraq to rationalize their immoral drive for higher profits."

KMU and its allies like Piston (Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at Opereytor Nationwide) have been calling for price cuts of P2.08 per liter since October 2002.

"Add this to the price increases they effected since January, the oil firms should slash prices by P4.22 and P3.46 per liter of gasoline and diesel," Labog said.

In a separate interview, Piston president Mario Garvida said that the group filed a petition for a P1 fare hike last November.

"We are also considering the plight of the poor masses, so we will not ask for a bigger increase even if diesel prices today are much higher than those in November," Garvida said.

In a joint statement, KMU and Piston blamed the Macapagal administration for "acting like a patron to Petron, Shell and Caltex."

For its part, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) called on the government to implement price controls following the "continued failure of the administration's oil security plan to check overpricing and wanton price adjustments by the oil cartel."

Bayan was referring to a government order requiring local oil refiners to maintain a minimum inventory of 30 days. Small players are required to keep a minimum inventory of 15 days.

Palace tells Meralco to slash PPA charges

From page A1

National Economic and Development Authority, pointed out that Meralco was getting the lion's share of the PPA charges currently reflected in electric bills.

Of the P2.40 in PPA charges per kilowatt hour, the government-owned National Power Corp. gets only 40 centavos while Meralco gets P2.00, according to Neri.

"The impact of Meralco's PPA (on electricity bills) is quite big," said Neri at a press briefing after he attended the meeting of the Neda executive committee in Malacañang.

The PPA is an automatic cost recovery mechanism set up by the National Power Corp. and distributor utilities like Meralco to cover fluctuations in fuel prices, electricity bought from independent power producers (IPPs) and the foreign exchange rate.

The PPA includes the cost of electricity that the IPPs do not generate.

Amid a widespread clamor for the scrapping of PPA charges, President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered Napocor in May last year to lower its PPA. The reduction led to lower electricity rates. But the PPA charges have gone up largely due to Meralco's collection of PPA charges that it stopped collecting from January 2000 to September 2002. The Energy Regulatory Commission allowed Meralco to recover P7.3 billion in PPA charges starting December.

Neri said power costs were among the three matters taken up by the Neda executive committee, which Ms Macapagal chairs. The others were the impact of the oil price increases and ways to boost the mining industry.

"The President has one major bottom line which is the impact (of power costs) on the consuming public," Neri said.

Meralco welcomed Malacañang's request to lower the PPA.

"Whatever changes electricity prices make on the side of power producers would naturally be reflected in Meralco's PPA," Jesus Francisco, president of the utility firm, said in a telephone interview.

Meralco officials have reiterated that the company was only "a collector" of the PPA and that not a centavo of the charge goes to the company.

Francisco said Meralco was engaged in the renegotiation of its contracts with its own IPPs, which could result in lower power costs. Aside from Napocor, the Lopez-controlled utility buys its supply from First Gas Power, Quezon Power Philippines and Duracom. First Gas is owned by the Lopezes.

"(The Malacañang announcement) may also be a signal urging us to fast-track our negotiations with IPPs, but one cannot rush these things," Francisco said.

Asked whether the government would compel Meralco to reduce its PPA, Neri said: "We don't know."

Neri, however, said Meralco "will have to conduct its negotiation" with the IPPs servicing its needs so that it could reduce its PPA charges.

Asked whether the government would summon Meralco officials to a meeting to discuss the reduction of its PPA

charges, Neri said: "I guess it may come to that once we have the facts and figures."

Neri said Ms Macapagal would be briefed anew by energy department officials on this matter.

"Once she has a very good estimate of the bottom line and details on how this bottom line is achieved, then that's when she will decide," Neri said.

The government itself is negotiating with IPPs for the reduction of power costs amounting to a total of $700 million, according to Neri.

Neri said an initial reduction of $150 million would cut the PPA charges that consumers were paying by 35 to 40 centavos.

Consumers are current paying P6.06 per kWh of which P2.40 represents PPA charges.

A government study had found that of the 35 IPP contracts only six were without "legal and financial issues." Five were found to have defective contracts.

Most of the IPP contracts were signed during the Ramos administration in the aftermath of the debilitating power outages that hit the country in the early 1990s.

Besides the reduction in PPA charges, consumers are expected to get a a P28 billion-refund from Meralco. The Supreme Court has ordered Meralco to refund customers the amount representing overcharges.

Pro-Danding ...

From page A1

that sanctions could break up the party.

Party sources said members of the Lakas executive committee would meet soon to "discuss sanctions" ranging from reprimand to expulsion.

"It must be stressed that President Macapagal-Arroyo herself ordered party leaders during the national directorate meeting in Malacañang on Jan. 20 to refrain from talking politics," said a party leader who asked not to be named.

Ms Macapagal and Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. are co-chairs of Lakas-CMD.

"What made matters worse was that they were endorsing an outsider," the official said in reference to Cojuangco, leader of the Nationalist People's Coalition and friend of deposed President Joseph Estrada. Estrada was Cojuangco's running mate in the 1992 presidential election.

The official noted that the inclusion of "some supposed party loyalists" in the draft-Cojuangco petition had "shocked party leaders."

Among them were Rep. Robert Ace Barbers (Surigao del Norte), a son of Sen. Robert Barbers, and Rep. Trinidad Apostol (Leyte), wife of former Rep. Sergio Apostol, chair of the government-owned PNOC Energy Development Corp.

The official noted that party leaders had expressed alarm over the "prostitution of Lakas by these party elements."

"It looks like we have termites inside the organization," he said. "They will have to explain and they will have to be dealt with."

Lakas congressmen led by Representatives Jacinto Paras (Negros Oriental), Prospero Pichay (Surigao del Sur) and Aniceto Saludo (Southern Leyte) have drafted a petition urging Cojuangco to run.

The Lakas official said the party had decided at its national directorate meeting that it would field a party stalwart as standard-bearer in the 2004 presidential election. The ruling party is looking for a standard-bearer because Ms Macapagal will not run in 2004.

Defiant

Paras was defiant. "They can go ahead if they want but that doesn't change the fact that we feel there is no viable presidential candidate in Lakas," said Paras, Lakas chair in Negros Oriental and chair of the House committee on transportation and communication.

"How about those who are openly supporting (ex-Sen. Raul) Roco? Are they being sanctioned as well?" he asked.

Roco, the man to beat if elections were held today, according to recent surveys, belongs to Aksyon Demokratiko, a member of the ruling coalition.

Paras said the petition, which he presented to Cojuangco on Friday, was "just an expression of choice."

"We made it in good faith knowing that the NPC (Nationalist People's Coalition of Cojuangco) is an ally of Lakas and if not for the NPC, the coalition in the House would not have happened and lasted," he said.

He said punishing those supporting Cojuangco would be a selfish act because the administration was benefiting from its coalition with the NPC.

Paras said the move to punish them was the handiwork of "30 unelectable members of Lakas," including Lakas executive director Jose Rufino, national spokesperson Heherson Alvarez and secretary general Hernando Perez.

Paras warned that the party would break up if some party leaders pushed for the sanctions.

Asked if Lakas was ready to face a mutiny, the Lakas source said: "In politics, you might win more by losing some."

Erap wins case ...

From page A1

The man who rode to the presidency in 1988 on the 'Jeep ni Erap" campaign slogan was awarded half a million pesos in damages in a civil case he filed against a jeepney driver.

When told of his legal victory, Estrada joked in Filipino: "I might start believing again in the judicial system." The Court of Appeals ordered jeepney driver Efren Ramos and his operators to pay Estrada for bumping the Nissan Datsun station wagon Estrada, then a senator, was driving in San Juan in 1988.

The CA Second Division upheld the ruling of a Pasig court awarding damages to Estrada in connection with a traffic altercation on May 7, 1988.

Estrada, on trial for a P4.1-billion plunder charge, is apparently not waiving any claims. The amount he won, he said, "won't be enough" to cover for his wrecked vehicle, the injuries he and security aide Benedicto Flores sustained, and the inconvenience the accident caused.

He said he had almost forgotten about the incident, but now recalled that it had almost cost him his life.

"Good thing I came out of it alive," he said, adding that he was confined for three days at the Cardinal Santos Hospital for contusions on his face and bruises on his body.

He also recalled that the accident took place in the afternoon and the erring jeepney driver was trying to beat the red light at the Edsa-Ortigas intersection.

The decision was written by Associate Justice Buenaventura Guerrero, division chair, and concurred in by Associate Justices Teodoro Regino and Mariano Del Castillo.

"We find the award of damages to Estrada proper. The hospital expenses of Estrada and Benedicto Flores were well-supported by receipts and certifications issued by the attending physicians and hospitals where they had been confined," the decision read.

The CA also said the damage to the station wagon was established by the cost of repair reflected in the job orders and receipts issued by the automobile shop.

"Estrada also lost income due to delays in the shooting of his movie, 'Kuko ng Agila,' which delays were in turn due to his hospital confinement after the accident," the SC said.

Considering Estrada's "stature in the movie industry and the talent fee he commands," the CA awarded to him P200,000 in unearned income.

The CA also sided with the trial court in awarding to Estrada P5,560 in hospital and medical expenses, P144,206 as cost of the car's repair with interest of 6 percent per annum and P100,000 as moral damages.

But the CA modified the trial court ruling by deleting the award of P30,000 in attorney's fees which, the court said, was "untenable."

Court records showed that at about 4:30 p.m. on May 7, 1988, Estrada was driving his station wagon, with plate number PCD 717, on the northbound lane of Edsa en route to his residence in Greenhills, San Juan. He was on his way home from his Makati office.

When he reached the intersection of Edsa and Ortigas Avenue, he turned left on Ortigas "on a green light traffic signal."

"Before Estrada could complete his turn, a speeding passenger jeepney from the southbound lane of Edsa with plate number DEL 997, driven by Efren Ramos, bumped the right rear fender of the station wagon," the decision read.

"The collision sent the car spinning while the jeepney turned turtle. It appears that the jeepney had defective brakes and it was running at a speed of 60 kilometers per hour while beating a red light traffic signal," said the CA.

The jeepney was owned by John Lim of Wilson Motors and Body Builders. But Ramos pointed to Lim Tek Chiong and Jeng Lim as co-owners of the jeepney.

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SPORTS

Editor Al S. Mendoza ● Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

Hoya-Mosley fight cancelled

LAS VEGAS—Shane Mosley couldn't get his price, so his Sept. 13 fight with Oscar De La Hoya is off. Mosley had until Monday to sign for a $4.25 million purse to fight De La Hoya. When he didn't, promoter Bob Arum withdrew the offer and said the fight would not happen. "He passed on it so it's over," Arum said. *AP*

FIRST GENT'S 12TH LEG

Salvador fires 67, takes 1-shot lead

By Jong Arcano

First Gentleman's
PHILIPPINE GOLF CIRCUIT
2002 - 2003
Jointly undertaken by:
Federation of Golf Clubs (Phils.), Inc
The First Gentleman Professional Golfers Association Inc of the Phils. (PGAP)
San Miguel BEER

JUANITO Pagunsan (right) tees off as Rodrigo Cuello looks on during the opening round of the First Gentleman's Cup Circuit 12th leg at the Manila Southwoods Legends course yesteday. Elmer Salvador carded a 67 to lead the field by 1 shot.

ROGER MARGALLO

ELMER Salvador was back at the top yesterday. He's just hoping he stays there long enough to finally score his first win as a professional.

Salvador, the season's surprise package, parlayed eight birdies into a five-under-par 67 yesterday for a one-stroke lead in the 12th leg of the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit at the Manila Southwoods Legends course.

Salvador's solid shotmaking saw him gun down seven birdies in a 10-hole stretch from the sixth and despite a last hole bogey, edged ahead of Cassius Casas by a mere stroke.

The last time he was on the lead, Salvador set the course record of 10-under 62 at Del Monte which remains the lowest score so far this season. He eventually lost his bid for a breakthrough since he turned pro in 1994 to Casas in a six-hole sudden-death playoff.

Bugged by severe pains on his rotator calf, Casas hit only five greens but didn't drop a stroke and scored a 68. He used his short game brilliance to save 12 pars from around the green that went with his four birdies.

New Order of Merit frontrunner Richard Sinfuego, fresh from handing Casas his fourth setback in the last five weeks at the Orchard, barged into contention, joining Joselito Rempojo in third spot at 69.

Sinfuego knocked in a beauty of a putt from 40 feet for a birdie on the first hole, one of the five he made that cushioned two bogeys in the back nine.

Japanese Wataru Toriguchi emerged as a possible foreign threat with his 70 tying him for fifth Ric Borreta and Al Cruz in the P600,000 tourney bankrolled by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo's foundation and San Miguel Beer.

Ramon Brobio, Roger Antonio, Roger Cabajar, Dan Cruz, Edwin Estrera and Robert Pactolerin all fired similar 71s to complete the under-par scorers.

Salvador already had led a tournament at least five times in the revived circuit organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines Inc.

Casas, meanwhile, said his sore shoulder restricted his swing and gave him problems all day. He was all over the course all day, straying his drives to the wrong fairways and playing his approaches from under the trees. But he made a lot of magical recoveries, two-putting from as far as 50 feet on the slippery greens. Of the five greens he hit, he made four birdies, one of them from 30 feet on the 16th.

The scores:

67-Salvador E.

68-Casas F.

69-Rempojo L.

70-Borreta R., Cruz A., Horiguchi W.

71-Estrera E., Antonio R., Brobio R., Cabajar R., Cruz D., Pactolerin R.

72-Magada B., Manubay M., Iwata M.

73-Dizon M., Ginez S., Kempis N., Lascuna T., Pucay M.

Gordon ace

RETIRED PAL pilot Capt. Ferdinand "Nonot" Gordon made his first hole-in-one in 20 years of playing golf yesterday. The rare feat, witnessed by NGAP Treasurer Alice Ll. Andrada, happened at the par 3, 138-yard 7th of the Southwoods Legends. Gordon used a Taylor Made #7 iron and a #4 HVC Titleist ball.

SK golfer to leave Australia

SYDNEY, Australia—A 14-year-old South Korea-born golfer will likely have to leave Australia because her family overstayed their visas and have been declared "lawful non-citizens."

Sarah Oh, her parents and two sisters must leave Australia within a month after living here for over eight years, Australia's immigration department said Tuesday.

Oh was described by former golfer and television commentator Jack Newton as "the best young girl player I've ever seen."

The immigration department said the family had been granted temporary bridging visas allowing them to stay in Australia until an agreed departure date. That date, originally set for this week, had been deferred for a month to sort out a bureaucratic question over Oh's three-year-old sister, whose birth had never been registered.

The Ohs, who also have a 17-year-old daughter, are arranging their own departure and leaving voluntarily, at their own expense, said an immigration spokeswoman speaking on the customary condition of anonymity.

Sarah Oh was planning to try to qualify for the women's Australian Open, which will be played in Sydney next week. She started golfing at the age of 10 and reduced her handicap to four within two years. *AP*

SPORTSTV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Lakers vs Rockets, 11:30 a.m. (R-8 p.m.) Solar Sports.

TENNIS: The Collins Cup, 9 a.m. (r), Star Sports

Siebel Open, 6 p.m. (r), Star Sports

GOLF: Buick Invitational, 2 p.m. (r), Star Sports

POOL: Rack 'Em Up 2, 1 p.m. and 9 p.m. (r), Star Sports

BOWLING: USA vs Europe Tenpin Bowling 2002, 8 a.m. (r), ESPN

Nat'l interscholastics tilt on today at Villamor

JUNIOR players will fight for school pride as 120 youngsters representing 20 private and public schools plunge into action starting today (Wednesday, Feb. 19) in the long-awaited revival of the Samsung National Interscholastics golf tournament at the Villamor Golf Club course.

It will be the biggest assembly of school teams since the glory days of the interscholastics which had caused a steady turnover of talents from the jungolf ranks to the amateur scene who went on to reap honors for the country abroad.

"The revival couldn't have been possible if not for the cooperation of school officials and parents who share the belief that a national competition is always an integral part of a result-oriented system," said Boy Blue Ocampo of the organizing Professional Sports Management Group.

He cited the major support of Samsung through its president and CEO Sang Youl Eom in boosting interest to golf in the age-group level.

Bachmann still in fighting mood

By Dennis U. Eroa

WHERE ARE THEY NOW

KURT Streegan Bachmann Jr., who once owned the deadliest hook shot in basketball history, is in a fighting mood.

At 66, Bachman has retained the same ferocity and demeanor which earned him a place in the Hall of Fame.

"Crab mentality in basketball is pulling us down. You will be eaten alive if you have a vision for the development of basketball," said Bachmann, whose rivalry with the great Caloy Loyzaga provided color to Philippine basketball.

The 6-foot-4 son of a well-to-do German immigrant likes to smoke Marlboros.

"I'm going to suffer a heart attack if I stop smoking," Bachmann jested.

He also delights in reminiscing the good old days when Filipino dribblers lorded it over the likes of South Korea, China and Japan.

Despite countless setbacks, the most recent of which came in the Busan Asiad, Bachmann refuses to accept that the Philippines will forever play second fiddle to its Asian neighbors.

"I long for the golden years," said Bachmann. "A good start is to find the right guy to lead the country back to its pedestal."

Bachmann knows what he's talking. In 1964, a knee injury forced him to quit the game when he was 27, leaving behind an illustrious record. He starred as Ysmael Steel won the inaugural National Senior basketball league.

"Leaving basketball was the right thing to do. I couldn't survive on a P300 monthly salary," Bachman said. He injured his knee when Ysmael scrimmaged with a group of American servicemen based in the former Clark Air base.

Bachmann, a La Salle living legend, shone in the 1958 World Basketball Games in Chile, the 1958 Tokyo Asian Games, 1959 Asian Games, 1960 Rome Olympics and the 1962 Jakarta Asiad, the last time the country won the gold.

Oldtimers at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum remembered Bachmann collaring big rebounds and sinking his patented hook shots as Yco recorded a rare 7th straight national championship title. Bachmann sank the winning shot in the 1960 tilt against Ysmael, a classic of a game which saw the Leo Prieto-coached Paintmasters rally from 22 points down eight minutes remaining before the final buzzer.

"I imbibed the discipline and mastered all the moves until I became known for the famous hook shot, long before Kareem Abdul-Jabbar did the sky hook in the NBA," Bachmann explained.

Bachmann said being included in the Hall of Fame is the crowning glory of his career.

"I would like to thank those who included me in the Hall. I share this joy with my family," said Bachmann.

BACHMANN: Deadly hook shot.

BETOY JOHNSON

Unlike others, who sank to despair after they hung up their jerseys, Bachmann came out victorious.

Armed with a college degree from La Salle, Bachman worked his way up to the corporate ladder. He is now president and chief executive officer of Mantrade development Corporation.

He married Lou and they had four children, one of whom was Richard, an ex-pro.

The Bachmanns presently control Relzbach Ventures, exclusive distributors of And1, a well-known brand of shoes, in the country. He relaxes with a round of golf every weekend at Calatagan, Batangas.

"Caloy once told me that we're born at the wrong time. I disagreed because I used basketball as a stepping stone to where I am now."

St. Scho, Miriam triumph

ST. SCHOLASTICA'S College, Miriam College and College of St. Benilde won the overall championship in their respective divisions Saturday as the 33rd Women's National Collegiate Athletic Association (WNCAA)-adidas tournament held its closing ceremonies at the Makati Coliseum.

St. Scholastica's also retained the college crown of the Don Henrico's Cheerleading Championship by upending host Assumption College and CSB.

The CSB Lady Blazers amassed 183 points with first place finishes in chess, swimming, table tennis, lawn tennis and indoor football to keep the overall collegiate crown it won last year.

Lyceum of the Philippines and St. Scholastica's placed second and third, respectively.

In the high school division, Miriam jumped from third place in the 32nd season to overall winner this year with 138 points. They won in basketball, volleyball and cheerleading.

De La Salle Zobel, taekwondo and indoor football champ, was just a point down at 137.

St. Scho is midget overall champ for the second straight year with 85 points.

The 33rd-WNCAA-adidas is being supported by RPN 9, Nokia, Kampo Uno, Close Up, Monster Radio RX 93.1, Don Henrico's Pizza, Elle, official marketing group Tactical Xperts Corporation, Robinsons Malls, Cafe Lupe and Cream Silk.

Reyes picks Red Bull, San Miguel as favorites

COACHES of the seven teams vying for the All-Filipino Cup which starts on Feb. 23 at the Big Dome downplayed their respective chances yesterday in the weekly PSA Forum at the Holiday Inn.

"For me, it's Red Bull, San Miguel, Ginebra, Talk N Text. And we're number five, right beneath these teams, right in the middle of the pack. I really don't think we were able to improve that much as the others," said Chot Reyes of Coca-Cola, the reigning All-Filipino champion.

Reyes said Coke is a solid team. "But games are won on the court, not on paper. So as long as we continue to work hard, good things will happen. It's going to take a lot from us to repeat and luck will play a big part should that happen," Reyes added.

Yeng Guiao of Red Bull, the back-to-back Commissioner's Cup champion and considered by many as the team to beat in the All-Filipino, laughed upon hearing Reyes' observation.

"I love to be the underdog. But it's hard to be one when it's Chot Reyes ranking your team as the favorite. I really think Coca-Cola will be in there and please don't believe Chot when he says he's No. 5 when in fact, they're the defending champion. San Miguel, if healthy, is tough. Then it's Talk N Text, Ginebra and Sta. Lucia," he said.

Also present we're coaches Paul Woolpert of Talk N Text, Perry Ronquillo of Shell, Alfrancis Chua of Sta. Lucia, Allan Caidic of Ginebra, Jong Uichico of Purefoods, Tim Cone of Alaska and Derek Pumaren of FedEx.

Woolpert sang a different tune, saying that he's the least qualified to issue a forecast since he's only in his second conference in the PBA. He came in to replace fellow American Bill Bayno, late last year.

Roy Luarca

PBA PRE-SEASON PRESS CONFERENCE

COMMISSIONER Noli Eala (4th from right) answers queries during the PBA pre-season press conference yesterday at the Manila Hotel. With him are members of the PBA board. AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

Shell-Ucaa stays alive

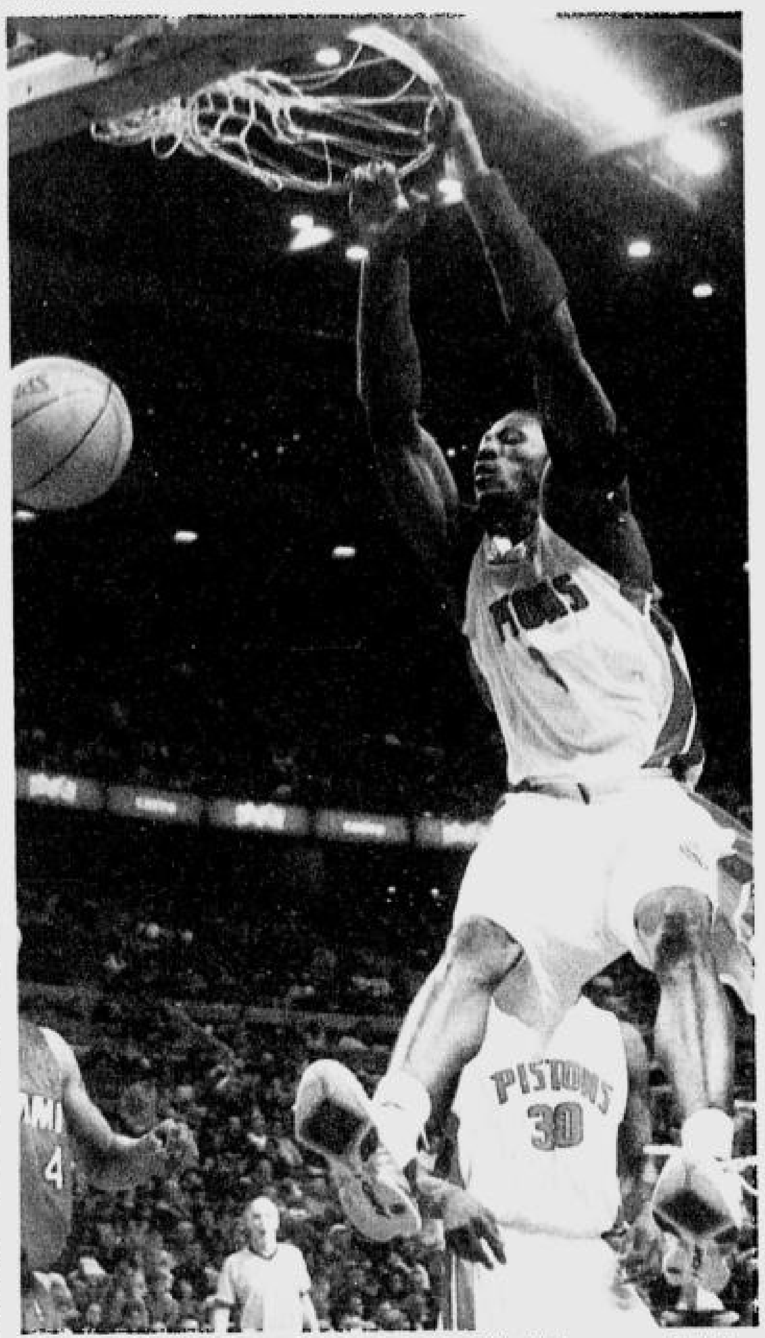
UNDERDOG Shell-UCAA kept its aspirations alive while Red Bull-National Youth Pool B bounced back with a monster win Monday in the quarterfinal round of the Bert Lina Six-Feet-and-Above Junior Cup at the Lyceum gym.

The Junior Turbo Chargers, who emerged winless during the eliminations, leaned on the heroics of Mitch Lodia to propel them past Coca Cola-National Youth Pool C, 88-86.

The boys from Colegio de San Lorenzo, Ryan Arana and Jerico Puno, scored the big baskets as they carried Red Bull to an 88-68 dumping of Ginebra-NCRAA in this Air-21 supported 18-under tournament conceptualized by Bert Lina for players six feet and above.

The games will be aired over NBN 4 on a slightly delayed basis.

Lodia's free throw with nine seconds left enabled the Junior Turbo Chargers to boost their hope of making it to the finals after finishing the elimination round with five straight losses.



DETROIT Pistons' Ben Wallace dunks during their NBA game against the Miami Heat yesterday. The Pistons won, 93-62. Other games saw Utah beat Minnesota, 109-97, and Portland subdue New York, 99-91. AFP

US dribblers here Feb. 20

A MASSIVE snowstorm in the US East Coast forced the delay of the arrival of the US team, which will play a series of goodwill games against the RP team from Feb. 22 -March 1.

The US team, led by Brando Payton, the 23-year-old younger brother of Seattle Supersonics All-Star guard Gary Payton, was due to arrive today. But the said weather disturbance shut down all of the major airports yesterday, forcing the US team to reset their arrival on Feb. 20.

Payton will be accompanied by 6'4 Maurice Brown, 6'3 Alvin Stephenson Jr., 6'0 Gary DiGrazia, 6'5 Nathaniel Gore, 6'8 Will Levy and 6'10 Terrence Super.

Beefing up the team are MBA veterans Chris Mendoza, Kalani Fereria, VJ Santos and actor Carlos Morales.

RP team coach Aric del Rosario will yet name the final composition, which will be competing in three major international tournaments this year -- the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (SEABA) Men's Championship in April, the Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) Men's Championship in September and the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam this December.

The 26 hopefuls currently in the pool are Francis Gerald Jones, Al Magpayo, Alwyn Espiritu, Rich Alvarez, Ranidel de Ocampo, Ronald Allan Capati, Richard Melencio, Al Vergara, Bernzon Franco, Emmerson Oreta, Willy Wilson, Jamal Vizcarra, Wesley Gonzales, Jay Lapinid, James Yap, Dean Paolo Hubalde, Mike Bravo, Don Villamin, Mark Macapagal, Celino Cruz, Dennis Madrid, Paul Artadi, Loreto Soriano, Mark Isip, Peter Jun Simon, Nino Canaleta, Ollan Omiping, Jean Marc Pingris.

First stop of the RP-US Goodwill Exhibition Series is the Pasig Sports Center. Gametime is set at 5 p.m. and will have the tune-up game between Welcoat Paints and Montana Jewels as curtain raiser at 3 p.m.

Xavier snares Tiong Lian cage crown

XAVIER School's spirited Stallions bucked spotty officiating to subdue Chiang Kai Shek, 82-77, Monday night and bag their third consecutive Tiong Lian (MMTLBA) basketball crown at a packed UNO School gym.

Steel-nerved Luke Orbos, JC Yu and Paul Chua, son of Red Bull team owner George, scored seven points in the last 43 seconds to seal the victory after CKS had threatened twice at 73-75 and 77-79.

With his father, former Gov. Oscar Orbos watching, Luke knocked in his fourth triple to make it 78-73. Yu answered CKS basket with a free throw and after CKS' Mendez drove in to cut the deficit to 77-79, the 6-foot-2 Chua sank the three free throws to finalize the count.

Chris Tiu, Bon Syiaco and Marty Tio also came up with fiery performances as the Stallions fought off the referees' clear bias for CKS by making controversial calls in the second and third quarters. Chua had to sit it out for almost two quarters after he was slapped with four fouls, including a technical, in the second.

At one point in the third, the refs called three unsportsmanlike and one technical fouls against Xavier, enabling CKS to sink four straight charities and close within 51-54.

"But the boys were determined and did not lose focus," noted Xavier coach Alfredo "Mon" Amador, who dedicated the victory to his mother, who died recently in Winnipeg, Canada, and was buried yesterday in Cardona, Rizal.

The scores:

XAVIER 82--Tiu 22, Orbos 15, Syiaco 14, P. Chua 12, Tio 6, Lao 6, Yu 5, R. Chua 2.

CKS 77--Co 29, Sevilla 20, Mendez 16, Yap 7, Rebosura 5, Chiu 0, Yao 0, Ong 0, Katigbak 0.

Quarters: 26-19, 46-38, 64-56, 82-77

St. Francis to defend inter-collegiate title

POWERHOUSE St. Francis of Assisi takes on other top collegiate squads when the finals of the National Students Basketball Championship begins on Sunday at the Albay Astrodome, Legazpi City, Albay.

St. Francis, the defending champion, leads three other teams from the National Capital Region competing against the host teams and contingents from the south in the tournament organized by the Basketball Association of the Philippines and hosted by Albay Province through Gov. Alfrancis Bichara and BAP Region V director Jun Lavadia.

Frontliners Ranidel de Ocampo and Irvin Sotto and playmaker Al Vergara will spearhead St. Francis of Assisi against NCR champion University of the East, runner-up Philippine Maritime Institute, NCAA titlist San Sebastian College, perennial contender University of Visayas and Mindanao bet Southern Colleges of the Philippines.

As host, Region V (Bicol) will be fielding in three teams-- Aquinas University of Legazpi, Bicol College and Divine World College of Luzon, while Region I will be represented by Luzon Colleges.

Liceo de Cagayan will banner Region X, while University of Mindanao will represent Region XI.

In the high school division, San Beda College and Philippine College of Criminology and guest team La Salle Green Hills are NCR's bets against an equally strong field from the other regions.

The national Students Basketball Championship is being supported by YKL Color Films, Spring Cooking Oil, Cebuana Lhuillier, Absolute, Healthy Options and Baker's Fair.

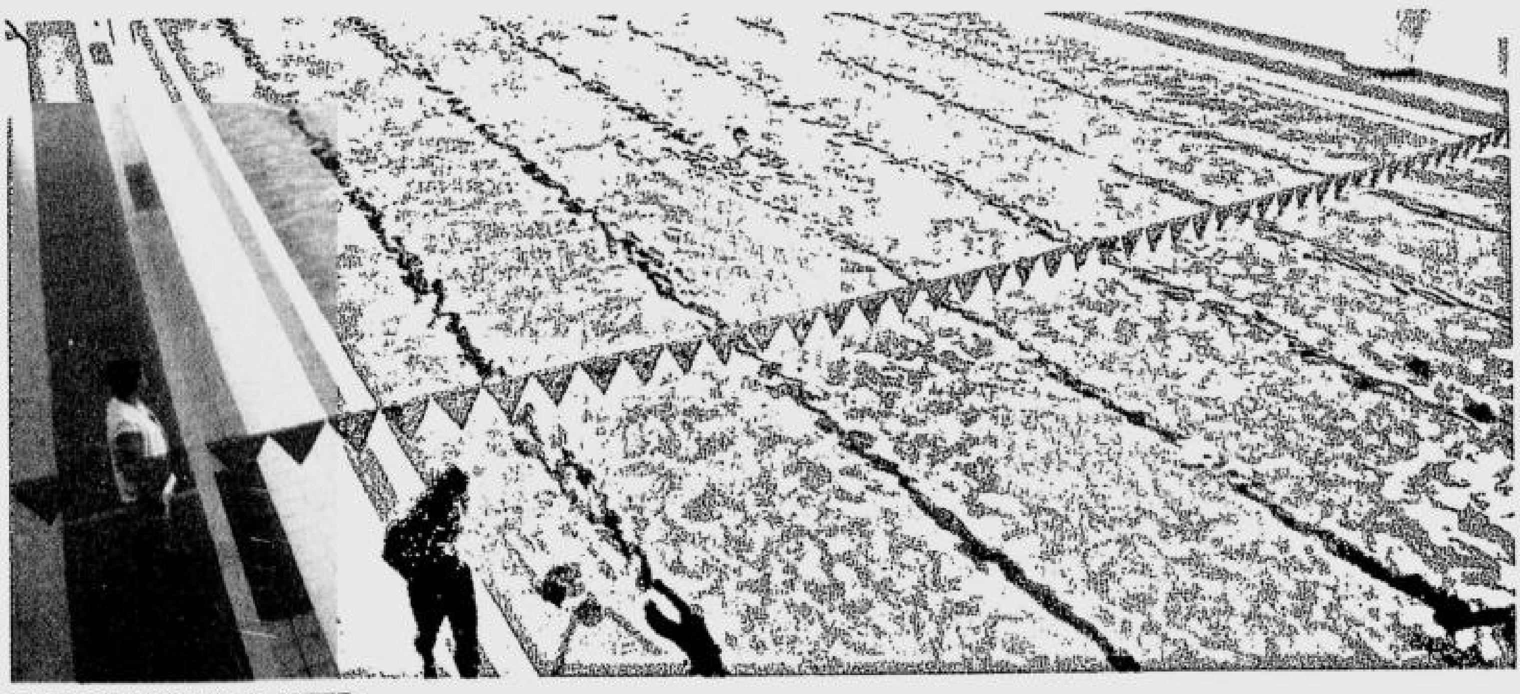
Roy Luarca

Mizuno-Westin starts tomorrow

PROMISING PJ Tierro of Olongapo City together with aspirants of the RP junior Davis Cup pool head the list of entries in the Mizuno-Westin Grand Prix Tennis junior men's 21-under tournament which kicks off tomorrow at The Westin Sports Club and Spa astro turf grasscourts.

Tierro, who bagged practically all the junior trophies in the last 4 months, should expect tough competition from fellow favorites Irwin de Guzman, Arithmetico Lim, Kyle Dandan, Nestor Celestino and players from the NCAA and UAAP schools.

Deadline for registration is set at 8 a.m. tomorrow at The Westin astro turf grasscourts with the draw and tournament proper to follow immediately.



RAZON SPORTS CENTER

This Olympic-size, six-lane swimming pool is one of the main features of the De La Salle University-Manila Physical Education and Sports Center which was recently named in honor of Don Enrique M. Razon. DLSU-System president Bro. Rolly Dizon, ICTSI president and CEO Ricky Razon, Don Enrique widow Josephine and Terry Capistrano, manager of the basketball, swimming and volleyball teams; attended the rites. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Lakers-Rockets game on Solar

ROOKIE sensation Yao Ming and the Houston Rockets face the Los Angeles Lakers anew today "live" at 11 a.m. on Solar Sports, with a replay at 8 p.m. But Yao-Shaq Part II may not materialize as Lakers center Shaquille O'Neal is listed as "questionable" for the game because of a sore left knee. The Rockets beat the Lakers, 108-104 in overtime on Jan. 17.

Tenorio joins draft

ATENEO pointguard Alfred Lewis Tenorio is all set to join the PBL this season as the deadline for rookie aspirants ends today, 5 p.m. at the PBL office, Makati Coliseum, 31 Mascardo St. La Paz Village, Makati. Tenorio, a 5-foot-7 native of Nasugbu, Batangas, was actually a product of the PBL Juniors. He made the Mythical Five and was the Most Improved Player of the NCAA 2000 season. For inquiries, applicants may call up the PBL office at 897-6383 or 895-6483.

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Walkout rocks softball board meeting

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ANGPING

THE AMATEUR Softball Association of the Philippines plunged into turmoil yesterday after the majority of its officers led by softball great Filomeno "Boy" Codiñera broke away from Asaphil president, Rep. Harry Angping.

Codiñera's move was triggered by Angping's proposal to amend the association's constitution and by-laws.

Codiñera, who served as the association's interim president before Angping took over last year, said his group protested Angping's move because "there are many pressing problems to attend to" in the association.

But Angping said he was merely "trying to correct a system which is not working efficiently" by proposing to have 15 board members evenly divided among team, individual and corporate members.

According to the existing Asaphil charter, the directors will be composed of representatives of teams which took part in the recent national championships.

The board is presently composed of 19 voting members.

"Our concern is that our clubs or teams nationwide will surely lose their voice in the board which will be composed of people without any clubs to speak of," Codiñera told the INQUIRER.

But Angping said these individual and corporate members are people who are "all too willing to help the sport but have no time and means to put up a team."

The lawmaker said these people and corporations will "surely help" the cash-strapped Asaphil shoulder its expenses, especially since the country will host the Asian men's and women's championships in May.

Walking out of the meeting were Codiñera, VP for Luzon Tonet Del Monte and nine other members of the board.

Codiñera said the constitution has been working since the Asaphil was instituted and that there are other ways to get funds other than "getting people or corporations to run the association."

Former Asaphil president Mario Raymundo also criticized Angping's move, saying he has been Asaphil president for 10 years and "found nothing wrong in its constitution."

Codiñera also protested the move to change the membership requirement of "Filipino citizenship" to a mere "resident status."

Biggest baseball contract

ATLANTA—Four-time Cy Young Award winner Greg Maddux avoided an arbitration hearing on Monday, signing the largest one-year contract in baseball history with the Atlanta Braves.

Maddux received a $14.75 million deal with the Braves.

The previous highest one-year contract was a $12-million contract that David Cone signed with the New York Yankees in 2000.

Maddux became a free agent after the 2002 season, but despite winning 16 games, failed to get many offers.

He accepted the Braves' offer of arbitration in December, meaning he was obligated to stay with the Braves for 2003.

28 NSAs meet today for Vietnam Games

TWENTY-EIGHT representaives of the national sports associations intending to send athletes to the 22nd Southest Asian Games in Vietnam on Dec. 5-13 this year will meet today.

They will be briefed by the Philippine Olympic Committee Technical Commission at 12 noon at the Philippine Columbian in Plaza Dilao.

With Steve Hontiveros as technical chair and Julian Camacho as co-chair, the TC will discuss with the NSAs the participation guidelines approved by the POC General Assembly last month.

The NSAs will also be asked to submit their respective requirements as part of their preparations for the Vietnam SEAG.

The 28 NSAs concerned are athletics, aquatics, archery, badminton, basketball, boxing, canoeing, cycling, fencing, football, gymnastics, judo, karatedo, rowing, sepak takraw, shooting, table tennis, taekwondo, lawn tennis, volleyball, weightlifting, wrestling, wushu, billiards, pencak silat, bodybuilding, chess and traditional boat race.

Wushu president Camacho is the Philippine delegation's chef de mission, while judo's Capt. Rey Jaylo and table tennis' Vic Valbuena are the deputy chef de mission for Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, respectively.

In its meeting yesterday, the TC, which has as members Jaylo, Valbuena, Gen. Mario Tanchanco, Col. Salvador Andrada, Manuel T. Lopez, Monchito Ilagan, Red Dumuk, Nestor Ilagan and Philippine Sports Commission's Edgardo Mateo and Ramon Suzara.

Marc Anthony Reyes

MCA chessfest stakes ₱.2 million

IT'S all systems go for the staging of this year's Metropolitan Chess Association (MCA) Amateur League first quarter which reels off at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 22, at the Lotus Garden Hotel located at the corner of Padre Faura and Mabini Streets, Malate Manila.

Jointly supported by Converse, Glutaphos, San Miguel Beer, JCA Commercial Signs and Perfection Printers Corp., more than P150,000 in cash prizes will be disputed in this two-day team competition organized by Metropolitan Chess Club, and sanctioned by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

Each team is composed of four players, three regulars and one alternate. Each team is allowed to field a master, who plays in Board One only, provided the sum of the latest NCFP ratings of the three highest rated members does not exceed 6000.

Early entries were defending champion Team Marikina, Bol Anon, PNP, PCSO, CMI Realty Corp., DAR, RCBC, PSC, Lex Corp., Tabilog Cargo Services, Olongapo g4, Sta. Ana Rising Youth Council, SSS, BPI, Pia-Madonna Enterprise, ATP, Aspire-IT, DTI, MLQU, UST, DLSU, Quezon City, Brgy. West Crame, Kallokan, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Valenzuela and Meycauayan.

Also expected to join are CBCEA, Team Dasmariñas of Mayor Elpidio Barzaga Jr., Mandaluyong, Manila, Makati, Dumalag Corp., JMA, Sulong Laguna, Cabuyao Chess Circle, Bagong Silang Strugglers, Brgy. T.S. Cruz Subd., PAGS, CDO-Mindanao, NAga, Iriga City, Lipa City, Ilocos Sur and Benguet province.

Deadline for provincial entries is before 7:30 a.m. on Feb. 22 at the venue site. Registrants with check payment have until 6 p.m. today, Feb. 19, to sign up at the MCC registration centers, namely: Rizal Memorial Sports Complex (NAS Office), 4/F J&F Divino Building in Aurora Blvd., Quezon City and at the Parañaque office or call 826-8560, 09168521069 and 09189393702.

Alinghi closes in on America's Cup

AUCKLAND, New Zealand —Nothing but stern.

That's what Alinghi of Switzerland showed beleaguered Team New Zealand all the way around the course, and the America's Cup is that much closer to going to Europe for the first time in 152 years.

New Zealand-born skipper Russell Coutts sailed another masterful race, steering the whimsically named Alinghi to a 23-second win Tuesday to give the Swiss a daunting 3-0 lead in the best-of-nine series.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Robert Pactolerin fired a 72 to post a two-stroke victory in the 75th Philippine Open at Wack Wack.

No pay, no permit

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THE POPULAR Philippine Basketball Association is supposed to be awash in cash, yet it is being in arrears with its payments to the Games and Amusements Board now amounting . to more than P3 million representing the government agency's three percent share of income from the radio and television coverage of PBA games.

It could lose its permit to stage this year's series (the inaugural All-Filipino Cup is set to open this Sunday, Feb. 23) or it could face a possible government suit if it fails to pay the agency its lawful share, according to sources in the GAB now headed by Eduardo Villanueva.

The GAB chair is giving the PBA until today (Wednesday, Feb. 19), or at the most tomorrow (Thursday, Feb. 20) to settle its long-standing obligations.

"They can pay us in full, in monthly installments or through post-dated checks," said Villanueva, adding that he was amenable to a compromise settlement after he was assured by PBA Commissioner Noli Eala that the league would pay its debt.

"The PBA will definitely honor its obligations," said PBA chair Jun Cabalan.

***

FISTIANA NOTES. The Fiesta Fistiana is a boxing card promoted by the Philippine Sportswriters Association which is authorized by Republic Act. No. 1373 to hold one tax-free boxing show every year for the benefit of destitute and disabled Filipino pro boxers.

All the income derived form the card will go to the Disabled Boxers Trust Fund to be administered by the GAB, the PSA and the Philippine Boxing Association.

Launched in 1955 by the late Serafin Salvador, a Rizal congressman who had a big heart for the Filipino boxers, the Fiesta Fistiana was in the doldrums for years until one time, during a PSA Forum in 1996 (when I was the association president), Speaker Jose de Venecia and then Senior Deputy Speaker Rep. Raul Daza decided to help the PSA revive the worthy undertaking. The 1996 "Fistiana" was a huge success, with the proceeds submitted to an independent audit. For this year, GAB chair Ed Villanueva is mulling plans to stage another "Fistiana" in cooperation with the PSA now headed by Bert Cuevas of the Manila Standard. All the best!

***

LIVING LEGEND. Cockfighting's Living Legend, the venerable Ray Alexander of Alabama, was recently given the "Lifetime Achievement Award" by the National Cockers Association for his contribution to the development of the sport of cockfighting in the Philippines. Since coming here 27 years ago, Ray Alexander has won back-to-back championships in the tough World Slasher Derby where his fabled Stingray entries dominated the "Olympics of Cockfighting" in 1994 and 1995.

The "Lifetime" award, symbolized by a gold medallion, was presented to Alexander by NCA president Ito Ynares in the presence of national beauties Katherine Anne Manalo, one of the 10 finalists in the 2003 Miss World in London; Katherine Alzar, Miss Tourism International Ukraine-Black Sea; Michelle Reyes, Miss Tourism World; Karen Loren Agustin, Bb. Pilipinas Universe; and Ma-an Bayot; 2nd runner-up, Miss Internet.

Firefly Group paces derby

CROWD favorite Firefly Thunderbird 13 of the famous Firefly Group scored three straight wins in grand style Monday night to set the pace entering today's four-cock finals of the NCA 7-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum.

Two other entries shared the spotlight, also with identical three points, namely Flyover Jinafer and Liza Galore of veteran derby participants Eddie Araneta. Another Firefly entry, Firefly Thunderbird 8, landed a a close second with 2-1/2 points, while 10 other entries posted two points each to remain in the running in this derby hosted by Amang Magsaysay, JV Magsaysay and Romy Panganiban. The two-pointers are Thunderbird Firefly II of Big Dome owner Nene Araneta, Jimafer Clear Cut of Pampanga's much admired Madlambayan brothers, KGR St. Joseph, Geran, Super Elo Farm (April 25 Bacolor), KGR, Mulawin I, Corporation B, R&B Farm Binangonan I and CJR Nevada of Tos and Charlie Reyes.

Meanwhile, everything is in readiness for the NCA 7-Cock Derby on March 3-5, with popular Las Piñas Mayor Nene Aguilar and Gerry Ramos as hosts.

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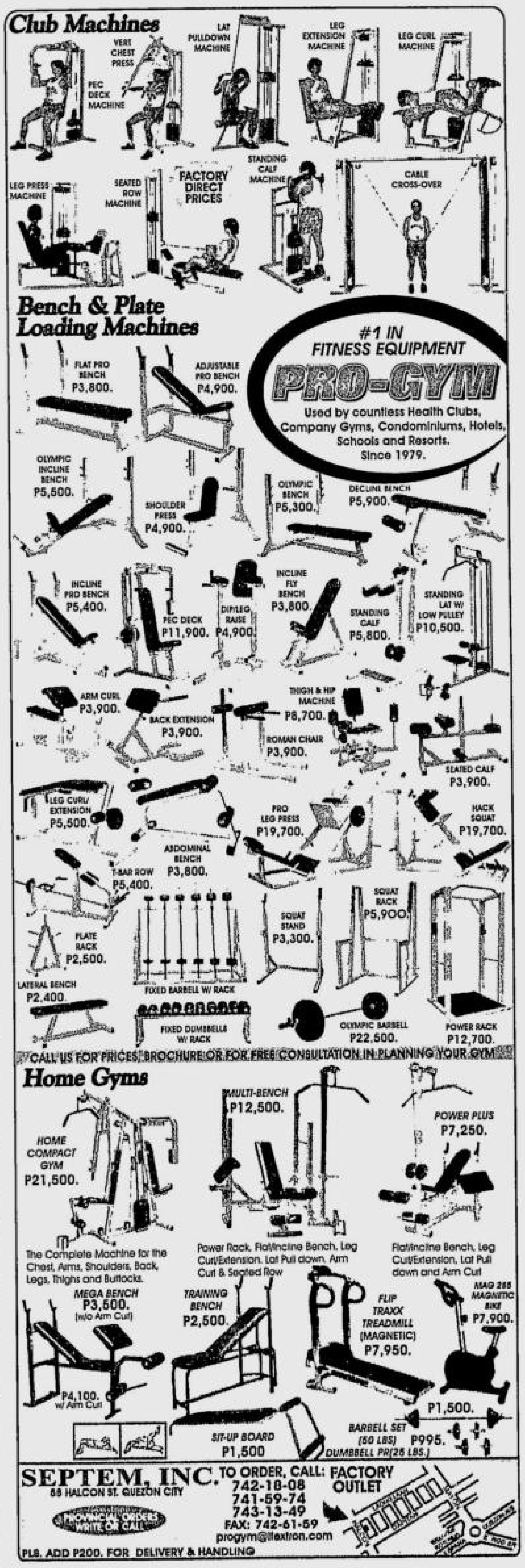
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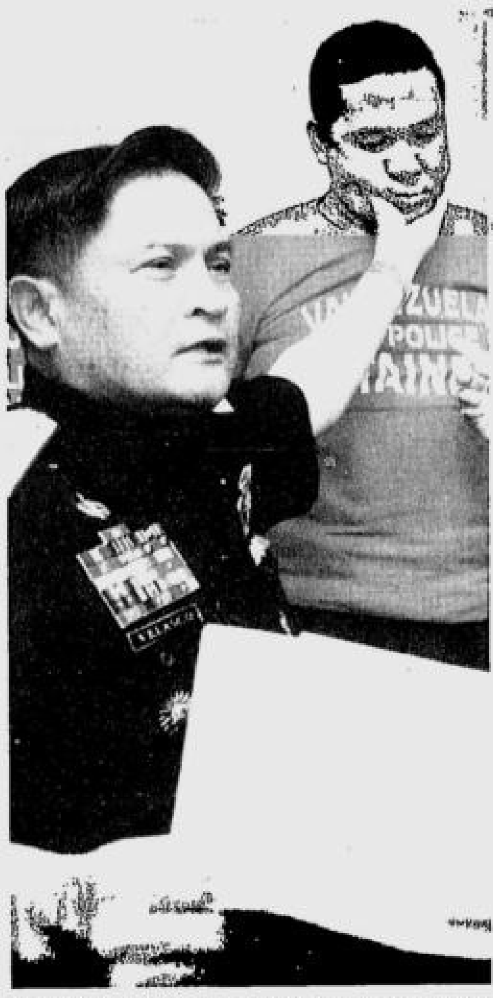

NCRPO Chief Reynaldo Velasco props up the face of PO3 Marlon San Pedro, caught red-handed while squeezing out ransom from a Chinese he had kidnapped, for a better view of the media. ERIK ARAZAS

Fire after fire; no warning

By Philip Tubeza
and Tina Santos

TWO fires struck Malabon and Binondo, Manila yesterday following a Sunday blaze that destroyed P2 million worth of properties in Sta. Mesa, Manila. Last Friday, a total of three fires hit Quezon City, including the one that burned down a squatter colony along Visayas Ave. The day before that crippling 3-fire blow, about 500 families lost their houses in another big fire in Binondo.

Normally, this dreadful rash of fires hit Metro Manila in March, ironically regarded as national fire prevention month.

Records at the Bureau of Fire Protection showed there had been a total of 281 fire incidents in the National Capital Region for the period covering Dec. 22, 2002 to Jan. 21, 2003.

Fire authorities have told the INQUIRER these early blazes were being caused by unusually dry conditions prevailing in the

FIRE/ A27

Chinese freed; cop jailed

By Tina Santos

HE first tried to extort money. Then, in a dismal twist, a Western Police District policeman kidnapped his victim, a Chinese.

The suspect is now in jail.

PO3 Marlon San Pedro, identified as a member of the WPDO Station 11, and Ireneo San Andres, a seaman and a resident of 145 Culiat, Pulilan, Bulacan, were hauled off to jail Monday night in Valenzuela City after they allegedly held 29-year-old Lei Nui, a Chinese national, for ransom.

Nui, a student and resident of Unit 27 Jade Garden Town Homes, Don Pedro, Marulas, Valenzuela, was rescued unhurt during an entrapment operation by the Valenzuela Police Community Precinct 3 operatives led by their commander P/Supt. Salvador dela Cruz.

Kidnapping charges have been filed against San Andres and San Pedro.

Northern Police District Office direc-

CHINESE/ A27

FRIEND OF POOR KIDS Don Miguel Torres of the world-famous Torres Distillery of Spain arrives to formalize the expansion of a foundation for street kids. He meets the press tomorrow. ROGER MARGALLO

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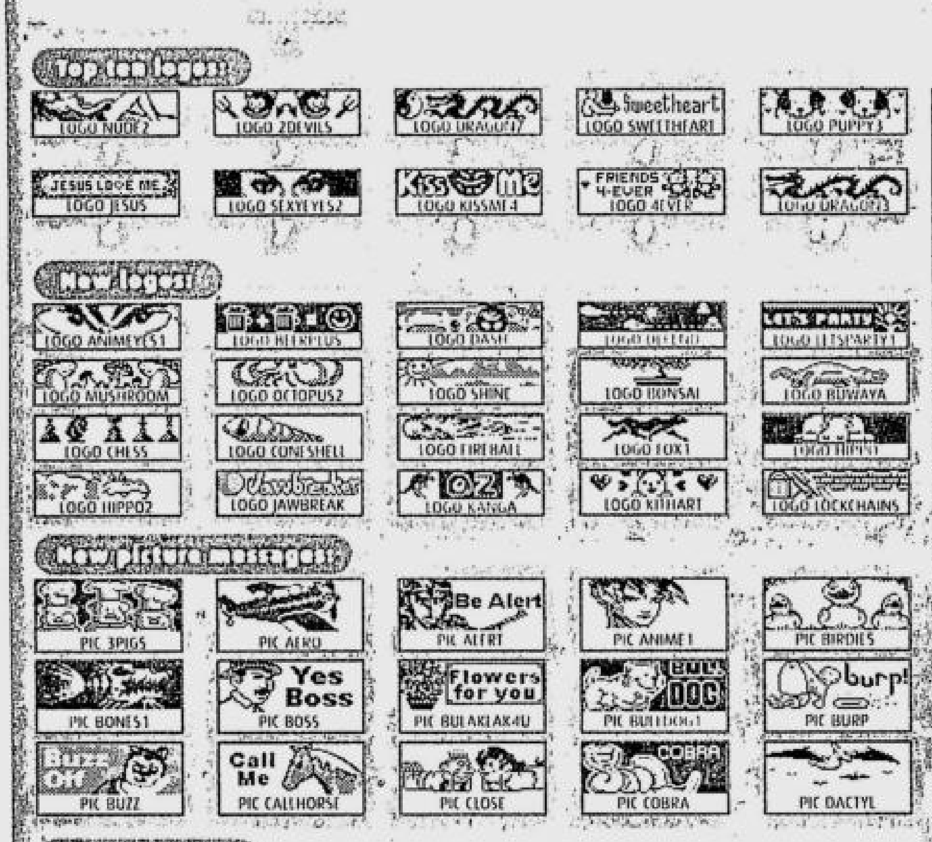

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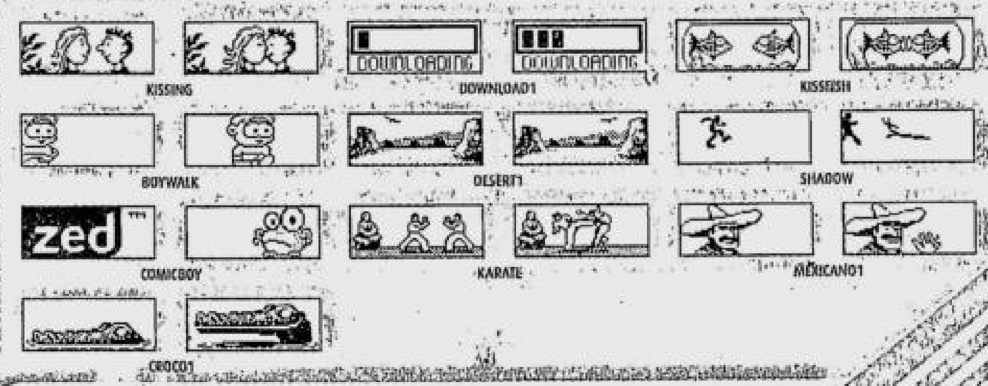

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POW! Pick of the Week

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BANTAY-USOK

A public service message from
SIEMENS

Darna! She never looked so good!

METROBRIEFS

Hostage-taker killed

POLICE shot dead Alfredo Cuyos, 27, after he held hostage his six-month old baby during a fit of rage in Binangonan, Rizal early Saturday morning. Cuyos, 27, died from two gunshot wounds in the body, police said. Policemen who were jogging near the Ynares Gym in Barangay Calumpang chanced upon Cuyos maltreating his baby daughter. Supt. Dionisio Hicban, Binangonan municipal police station commander, said the cops tried to pacify Cuyos, but he pulled out a dagger and threatened to stab his crying baby. The situation turned into a hostage drama with Cuyos demanding to see the President and members of the media. Hicban said the policemen were then forced to shoot Cuyos to save his baby, who suffered bruises in the neck and chest. ***Nelson F. Flores***

Porter stabbed to death

PORTER Alejo Garamay, 52, was stabbed to death inside the Pasig City Public Market early yesterday morning. Police said an unidentified man attacked Garamay who suffered 12 stab wounds in the body and died while undergoing treatment at the Rizal Medical Center. Witnesses told police that the suspect was laughing while he was stabbing Garamay. ***Nelson F. Flores***

Musicians robbed

CLUB MUSICIANS Adamson and Alejandro Cesante, 21 and 22; Duzzle Munoz, 23; Berachy Villavicencio, 25; Ryan Urias, 21; John Zapanta, 25, and Eric Feria, 30, were eating a late night meal at the Partners Pares at the corner of Kamuning Road and Scout Ybardolaza in Quezon City when four unidentified men robbed them of their belongings. Witnesses told police the suspects pointed handguns at the victims and robbed the musicians of their cash, valuables and cell phones. Feria was shot in the jaw when he resisted the robbers. The suspects fled after the robbery in a green Honda Civic (UJV-218), which was later found along Labira Street, Pandacan, Manila. The vehicle was earlier reported as stolen. ***Alcuin Papa***

Plumber murdered

DRIVER Virgilio Camagay, 31, was allegedly stabbed dead by plumber Dante Abenosa in Quezon City yesterday morning. Camagay died from 9 stab wounds in different parts of the body. Police believe an old grudge was the reason for the killing. Abenosa was arrested and is now in jail. ***Alcuin Papa***

16-year-old raped

FIVE UNIDENTIFIED men are being hunted down by police for the rape of a 16-year-old high school student inside the La Loma Cemetery in Bagong Barrio, Caloocan City last Sunday. Officer-on-case PO1 Laarni Labrador said the victim had reported the rape to police and had filed a complaint against Virginia Dela Cruz, 25, whom she accused of offering her to the five suspects for P200. She told police that she and Dela Cruz were walking home when the latter asked her to accompany her inside the cemetery. She said that the five suspects, who were wearing masks, raped her one after the other inside an abandoned house in the cemetery. She said that she begged Dela Cruz to help her, but she left and returned about an hour later to claim the P200 payment from the suspects. ***Tina Santos***

Man shot to death

RIZALINO CENES, who was jobless, was shot dead in front of his live-in partner Rowena Quion and son Aldin along Zosimo Street in Barangay Bagbaguin, Valenzuela City. Supt. Jose Marcelo, Valenzuela City police chief said Cenes was walking home with Quion and Aldin when the suspect suddenly blocked their path, shot the victim in the head and escaped on foot. Cenes was rushed to the Sanchez Marcelo Medical Clinic but was declared dead on arrival. ***Tina Santos***

Body dumped

POLICE have yet to identify a man who was found dead inside a sack in a grassy area in Caloocan City. Investigators at the Caloocan Police investigation unit said they received a call at 8:30 a.m. on Monday that a man's body was found inside a sack dumped along Atis Street, Barangay 168 in Deparo, Caloocan. Police said the victim had a bullet wound in the head. He was in a basketball uniform with the name "Garcia" and No. 6 on it. Darwin Espinosa, 9, found the sack while playing in the area. Investigators said they are looking into the possibility that the victim was salvaged. The victim's valuables and wallet were found on the body. ***Tina Santos***

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, February 19, 2003
6th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gen 8:6-13, 20-22
Gospel: Mk 8:22-26

When Jesus and his disciples came to Bethsaida, Jesus was asked to touch a blind man who was brought to him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had put spittle on his eyes and laid his hands upon him, he asked, "Can you see anything?"

The man, who was beginning to see, replied, "I see people! They look like trees, but they move around." Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again and the man could see perfectly. His sight was restored and he could see everything clearly.

Then Jesus sent him home saying, "Do not return to the village."

Commentary

There's something very special in the miracle of the cure of the blind man. It is the only cure in the Gospels which takes place gradually, in two stages. It may be that Jesus intended this gradual restoration of sight to be a symbol of the gradual enlightenment that would come to His disciples concerning His teaching. We simply have faith-the first dim light, by which we see darkly as through smoked glass. When we persevere, when we don't become discouraged because of our lack of understanding, we gradually develop a better spiritual insight.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

ETHICS (JUDICIAL ETHICS)—Gross ignorance of a judge— When the ignorance of a judge is so gross, he is administratively liable even if he acted in good faith. In the case at bar, while there seems to be no proof that respondent judge acted maliciously in precipitately deciding the criminal cases against complainant, her lapses cannot simply be ignored considering that the same pertained to an application of basic procedural rules which she is bound to know and observe. The mistake committed by respondent judge is not a mere error of judgment that can be brushed aside for being minor or negligible. Rather, it reflects an utter disregard of established rules which amounts to nothing less than gross ignorance of the law. As a general policy, a judge may not be disciplined for error of judgment, absent proof that the same was made with a conscious or deliberate intent to cause an injustice. However, this does not mean that a judge need not observe propriety, discreteness and due care in the performance of his official functions, most especially in a criminal case where an accused stands the risk of incarceration. Moreover, observance of the law, which he is bound to know and sworn to uphold, is required of every judge. When the law is sufficiently basic, a judge owes it to his office to know and simply apply it, such that anything less would be constitutive of gross ignorance of the law. Notwithstanding the foregoing, however, there is no basis for the OCA's finding of gross misconduct on the part of respondent judge. As an administrative offense, misconduct implies malice or wrongful intent, not mere error of judgment There is no showing here, and neither was it alleged, that respondent judge had any corrupt motive in erring as she did. Thus, she must only be disciplined for her inexcusable ignorance of the law. [Citations omitted.] [Resolution, Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, Dayawon v. Garfin, [A.M. No. MTJ-01-1367. September 5, 2002] DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

TIGHT SQUEEZE
It's a tight squeeze for these inmates in a detention cell in Camp Panapio, Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

Closure ordinance against oil depot impossible to enforce, says Atienza

By Jerome Aning

ATIENZA

THE AGREEMENT allowing the country's biggest petroleum firms to stay in the Pandacan oil depot and scale down their operations does not supersede an ordinance mandating the facility's closure.

This sums up Manila mayor Lito Atienza's stand on a Supreme Court suit questioning his failure to phaseout the depot.

In a 10-page comment filed last Feb. 6, Atienza asked the High Tribunal to dismiss the case filed against him by the lawyers' group Social Justice Society and two Pandacan residents for lack of merit.

The resolutions extending the stay of the oil firms in Pandacan "makes it impossible for (me) to enforce the closure ordinance," Atienza said.

Two days before the ordinance took effect on July 28, Shell, Caltex and Petron entered into a memorandum of agreement with the mayor to reduce their operation by 40 percent by the end of 2002.

The MOU was ratified by the Council in a resolution on July 16, 2002. Last Jan. 30, the Council extended the effectivity of the MOU for another three months.

"Simply put, these two resolutions have put on hold the (phaseout law)," Atienza argued.

He said the ordinance remains valid and in full force.

Repeating earlier arguments, Atienza said the City Council had the ultimate say on the MOU.

A provision in the MOU states that the agreement must be "submitted to the council for appropriate action."

"The MOU was executed taking into account the true spirit and intent of the ordinance," Atienza explained. "At the very least, the MOU is to be considered as mere guidelines for the full implementation of the ordinance.

"The MOU is only a manifestation of the oil companies' (compliance) with the ordinance. It is not an agreement to put on hold the effectivity of the ordinance," he said.

Atienza added that the MOU was done with intent to comply with the visions and policies embedded in the ordinance—promoting sound urban planning and ensuring public health, safety and welfare.

He said that when he signed the agreement he did not only consider the security and welfare of the residents living around the depot but also the detrimental effects the closure could bring on the national economy, which the energy department had foreseen.

The Pandacan terminal supplies 90 percent of Metro Manila's fuel and 50 percent of the entire country's.

Energy Secretary Vicente Perez said on Monday that he hopes the city will give the oil firms more time to comply with the terms of the MOU.

The MOU requires the firms to dismantle several fuel tanks, build a "green" buffer zone separating the depot from the residential areas, and work for an integrated distribution and supply facility.

Manila councilor wants pets buried in cemetery

By Jerome Aning

THE MANILA City Council has approved on first reading an ordinance expropriating a piece of the Manila North Cemetery in Sta. Cruz for an animal hospital and a pet cemetery.

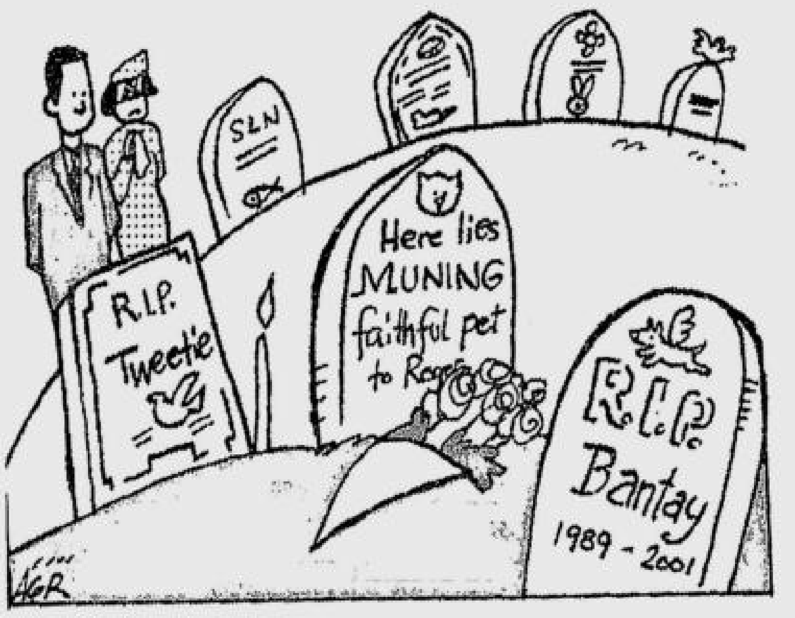
But the ordinance, authored by Councilor Cita Astals, is expected to draw stiff opposition from squatters living in the cemetery's remaining vacant areas.

The ordinance allocates 5,000 square meters of the cemetery for a hospital and a final resting place for pets.

"The hospital will provide veterinary services for animal pets of residents, while the cemetery will serve as final resting place for pets such as dogs, cats and other domesticated animals," said Astals.

The actress-turned-politician, who is also a pet owner, justified the accommodations she plans to give to the domesticated animals, saying that "the present generation of pet owners have embraced their pet animals as part of their families."

The proposal of the 5th district councilor has been referred to the council's committees on health and on engineering and public works.



Text complaints prompt CSC to closely watch Muntinlupa

By Volt Contreras

THE CIVIL Service Commission's "TextCSC" Project had prompted an entire local government unit to be on its toes in the past few months after its personnel collectively became the subject of a complaint sent to the CSC via text messaging.

Because of that text complaint against his city hall people, Muntinlupa City Mayor Jaime Fresnedi has issued appropriate memorandums while the CSC continues to monitor his employees and officials.

The complaint identified employees who habitually arrived late for work or took meal breaks when they are supposed to remain on their posts.

It said food vendors were allowed to go from room to room even during office hours.

Unlike most complaints sent through text messaging, those raised against Muntinlupa were the general observations of an unsatisfied private citizen who saw how a day was like at city hall.

"IM JST OBSERVANT, ," read part of the complaint. "PLS WITNESS DEM TOO."

"Usually we receive complaints directed at one particular official," said a CSC official privy to the monitoring. "But the one about Muntinlupa was a commentary on the system, the pervading office culture itself.

"After relaying the complaint to the Mayor, we later conducted our own interviews with people who transacted business with city hall," the CSC official said.

"In fairness to them (Muntinlupa employees), the feedback had so far been positive."

Reached by phone yesterday, Fresnedi confirmed having received a CSC communication regarding the complaint.

"Memos had been issued to address it," he said. "We actually welcome such observations."

The CSC official encouraged ordinary citizens to report similar observations of unethical or unprofessional conduct among government employees.

They can send complaints via Globe cell phones at 0917-TEXTCSC (8398272).

Trash collector killed in freak accident, man in birthday bash

By Agnes E. Donato and Tina Santos

A TRASH collector was killed on Monday afternoon after he was hit in the head by the improvised iron support of a garbage truck.

Victim Norman Dagdag, 25, of Litex Road, Quezon City, died of serious head injury.

Police said Dagdag and his co-workers were collecting garbage on Forestry Street in Barangay Vasra, Quezon City at 3:30 p.m. on Monday.

He was climbing up to the trash compartment of the truck where he would catch the garbage bags his co-workers would be throwing to him when he accidentally kicked the iron support of the truck's cover, said PO2 Joseph Dino, officer on case.

The kick released the improvised support, which hit Dagdag in the head.

In Caloocan City, Michael Paguntalan, 28, of Blk 15, Lot 48, Phase 2, Area A in Dagat-dagatan, was stabbed to death during a birthday party on Sunday night.

Police arrested Jomar Santelices, 18; Zeus Belmonte, 18, both of Dagat-dagatan, Malabon City; and Queen Sara Hagiantan, 19, of Parañaque City for the killing.

Santelices and Belmonte were slapped with homicide while Hagiantan was booked for being an accessory to the crime.

Paguntalan died from several stab wounds in the body, police said.

Police gathered that the victim resented the racket being made by the party goers and allegedly attacked one of them with a piece of wood.

The attack allegedly prompted the suspects to charge at the victim, turning the party into a free-for-all.

MMDA, bus operators call truce

HINDI KA
BASURA
PEDICAB

WHILE MMDA officials iron out their differences with operators of public utility vehicles, vendors and pedicab drivers in Manila hold a rally in front of city hall to protest the way authorities have been treating their colleagues who have been detained or oppressed for earning a living. They added that the authorities should not blame them for the traffic situation in the city. ERIK ARAZAS

By Leila Salaverria

FINALLY, a truce.

Public utility vehicle operators and Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday ironed out their differences over the implementation of the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program.

The MMDA would continue to implement the number-coding on all PUVs for the rest of the week, while the PUV operators—bus operators in particular—promised not to defy the scheme anymore.

"All's well that ends well," Fernando said yesterday after a two-hour closed door meeting with various jeepney, taxi and bus operators. "Our experiment (on imposing the UVVRP on PUVs) will continue. Next week, the experiment would be done on private vehicles."

Claire dela Fuente, president of the Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association (Imboa) and Fernando's most vocal critic, yesterday assured the MMDA chair that all transport groups would comply with the number-coding scheme for the rest of the week.

"(PUV operators) met at the LTFRB office and we have all agreed to a consensus," she said yesterday. "We will not defy (the scheme)."

She added that the Imboa's plan to haul Fernando to court would not push through anymore. The PUV operators who attended also promised not to hold strikes in protest of the number-coding scheme.

As for the buses apprehended yesterday for violating the UVVRP, Fernando said the bus operators could just pay 50% of the fine.

He also promised to consult transport groups first before coming to a decision that would affect them.

Dela Fuente lauded the MMDA chair's decision.

Bus operators had expressed loud opposition to the MMDA chair's decision to impose the UVVRP for one week for fear of losing precious income, and vowed to defy Fernando's directive. On Monday, over 200 buses were caught violating the scheme.

Meanwhile, the PUV operators got an added bonus yesterday when Fernando agreed to their request last week that they just be made to pay for the highest fine on their ticket, and not the accumulated amount of all the fines for all the violations cited on the ticket.

Makati to keep UVVRP

THE MAKATI Council is about to make the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program a permanent fixture in the city.

Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado has authored a draft ordinance banning all private and public vehicles, including motorcycles, one day a week, depending on the last digit of their license plates.

But as a concession to motorists, the ordinance will not include the whole stretch of Edsa, C5, and South Superhighway in the traffic scheme.

The council cited the high volume of vehicles within the city when it decided to impose the UVVRP.

The ban starts from 7 a.m to 7 p.m. and does not cover ambulances, firetrucks, police patrol cars, military vehicles on official functions, vehicles commandeered by government personnel for emergency purposes, vehicles with diplomatic plates, government vehicles, school buses and shuttle services, media vehicles, Makati tow trucks, vehicles delivering perishable goods, and vehicles carrying relief goods to depressed areas.

The draft ordinance basically follows the same scheme as the current UVVRP. Vehicles with license plates ending in 1 and 2 are banned on Mondays, 3 and 4 on Tuesdays, 5 and 6 on Wednesdays, 7 and 8 on Thursdays, and 9 and 0 on Fridays.

Violators will be fined P300.

Leila Salaverria

Korean widow slain; Japanese tourist robbed

By Christian Esguerra and Philip Tubeza

KOREAN widow Byung Rae Kim-Rabello was robbed and killed inside a church in Parañaque City, while Japanese tourist Shunzi Sugue lost nearly a million pesos to two robbers on Roxas Blvd. in Manila, police said.

Kim-Rabello, 67, a caretaker of the Korean Union Church at the Multinational Village, was found dead at the church entrance by another employee at around 11 p.m. Monday, police said.

Investigators are suspecting security guard Vellaros Gambong, 25, who has allegedly gone missing. They said the victim's body was found while Gambong was supposed to be on duty.

According to the initial investigation, the victim could have died of severe blows to the head and body.

A payroll envelope was found in the victim's possession, indicating that her assailant could have taken her P20,000 salary.

Investigators also found a trail of blood from the victim's room inside the church to the main door.

The room was in disarray, police said.

In Manila, robbery victim Sugue, 50, said he was taking a stroll when the two robbers blocked his path near the heavily-guarded United States embassy at around 11:45 p.m. on Feb. 12, according to a Western Police District report.

The victim reported the incident to the police only on Monday.

Sugue, who is staying in an Ermita hotel, said the culprits pulled out a knife and a gun before they took his clutch bag which contained his passport and nearly two million yen (P896,600).

But some investigators are doubting Sugue's story. One police officer said the complainant might just be after some insurance money.

"Some of them lose money in the casino and then claim that they were robbed," he said.

Reports of the attack on foreigners came on the heels of another robbery, this time involving a Malaysian woman, last weekend.

Four suspected Ativan gang members, including an elderly woman and a five-month pregnant woman, drugged and robbed Malaysian tourist Hew Fie Yong while she was taking photographs of Luneta Park on Sunday.

Yong, 32, currently staying at the Dusit Hotel in Makati City, lost P2,000 in cash, a Nokia 8250 cellular phone, and a Sony 16MB memory card after the suspects gave her a drug-laced candy, said SPO4 Cecilio T. Sacorum of the Western Police District.

UP frats deny part in rumble

THE ALPHA Phi Beta and Upsilon Sigma Phi fraternities yesterday denied that those involved in the reported rumble in a bar on Timog Ave. on Sunday were members of their fraternities.

In a joint statement, officials of the Alpha Phi Beta and the Upsilon Sigma Phi have blamed "street gangs posing as fraternities," as the ones that "have unduly tarnished the good names of both fraternities."

The officials said that they are becoming concerned about how media have been portraying fraternities "in a negative light."

"We are issuing this joint statement in order to dispel all unsubstantiated reports and to protect the reputation that we have worked hard to protect," the officials said.

Meanwhile, the man who was reported to have played a part in the brawl, lawyer Jude Sudario, also called up the INQUIRER on Monday to say that he was not in the bar when the alleged fight took place.

Sudario said that on Sunday, he went to the hospital to visit four of his brothers in the Alpha Phi Beta fraternity who were injured in the brawl.

As he was about to leave the hospital, he claimed members of the Upsilon Sigma Phi fraternity beat him up.

He said he would file criminal charges against his attackers.

Teen thrill killers stab man in front of his girl

By Agnes Donato

POLICE are now hunting down eight unidentified teenagers—all suspected drug addicts—for allegedly beating up and stabbing to death a 20-year-old man in Quezon City on Monday.

Wilson Tungpalan Jr., of Barangay Holy Spirit, Quezon City, was already dead when witnesses took him to the Fairview General Hospital, police said.

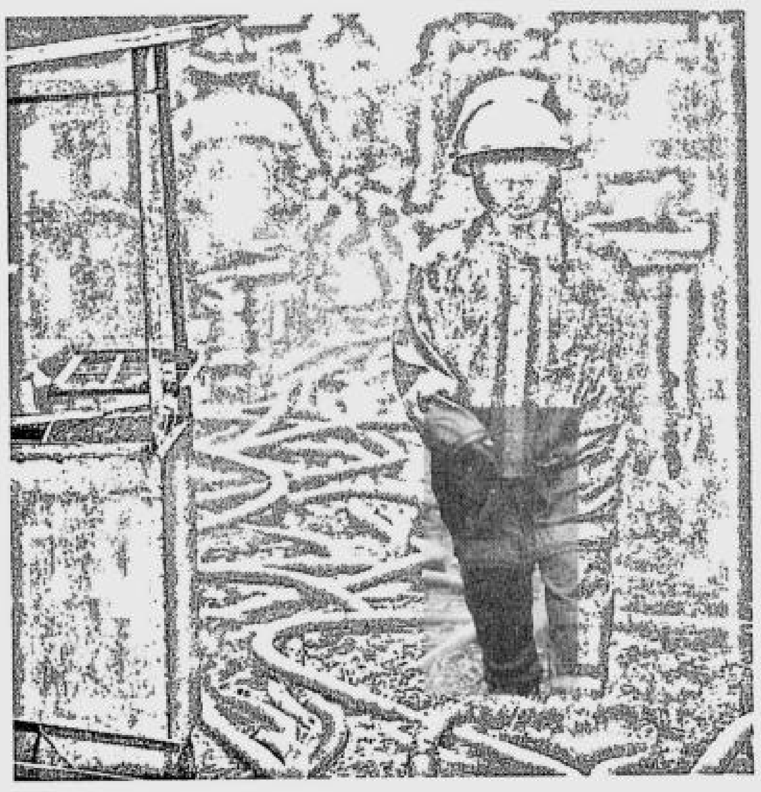
PO2 Edwin Dela Cruz said that the suspects, who were described as in their late teens, did the killing apparently for kicks.

Dela Cruz maintained that robbery could not have been a motive because Tungpalan's valuables were intact.

Initial reports showed that the victim and his live-in partner, Lou Arlene Mendoza, were walking home at about 2:30 p.m. on Kasunduan Street, Barangay Holy Spirit, when the teenagers suddenly blocked their path.

The suspects, who were believed to be high on drugs at the time, then ganged up on Tungpalan and stabbed him in the chest. The victim fell to the ground as his girlfriend screamed for help.

The teens fled on foot right after the incident, police said.



A FIREFIGHTER, ankle-deep in slush, picks his way through debris and scattered hoses after putting out a fire that hit a building on Hormiga Street in Binondo, Manila. ERIK ARAZAS

Chinese ...

From page A25

tor Marcelino Franco Jr. said Nui and two other Chinese nationals, identified as Lu Cong and Bian Jiang, were arrested by Manila policemen after they were caught slugging it out near the Binondo Church on Saturday.

A Northern Police District Office report said the three were taken to a police station in Divisoria, where Cong and Jiang were later released after coughing up P20,000 to the cops.

Nui was however left behind because he had no cash with him.

Here, PO3 San Pedro allegedly demanded $11,000 from Nui for his freedom. When the victim refused, P03 San Pedro took the victim to a safehouse in Pulilan, Bulacan.

Using the victim's own cellular phone, the policeman called Nui's friend, a certain Angelo, to produce the cash, police said.

Monday morning, PO3 San Pedro and Angelo agreed to lower the ransom to $1500. A pay-off was set at Angelo's house on 64 Rosal Street, Villa Teresa Subdivision, Marulas, Valenzuela.

Later on the same day, PO3 San Pedro, on board a white Isuzu Crosswind (CPX 185) driven by San Andres, arrived at the place at around 6:30 p.m. and parked the vehicle near Angelo's house, unaware that the vicinity had been surrounded by the Valenzuela policemen to entrap them.

Franco said Nui, the victim, was also aboard the vehicle and waiting for the pay-off before he could be released.

When Angelo came up to P03 San Pedro to hand over the marked money worth P5000, policemen moved in.

The suspects ran away.

Valenzuela policemen stationed in the vicinity joined in the chase and immediately hauled off the suspects to jail after they were cornered.

Last week, police also busted a kidnap-for-rasom group after arresting three men responsible for the kidnapping of a top insurance firm executive in Caloocan.

PBA needs an astringent

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

CAN anyone among our basketball stars succeed in selling a toothpaste product?

Never. Not unless his smile is as sweet and close-up pretty as that of Ruffa Gutierrez.

But don't tell that to owners of the Araneta Coliseum and Beam toothpaste product.

These two entities were completely convinced they could make a wholesale pitch for Beam through basketball. Through the Philippine Basketball Association, to be more exact.

***

Advertising in the PBA would make a whole world of difference, so Beam decided to ride on the pro league to boost its sales.

In fact, Beam literally entered the back door in a bold bid to outdo rivals Close-Up and Colgate.

It struck a deal with owners of the Araneta Coliseum to have its glossy, gigantic product logo painted on the hardcourt which will be the main focus of all PBA fans starting Sunday.

***

A neat deal?

Nope, cried the PBA, as it reacted to the backdoor advertising try with a loud threat to pull out of Araneta.

The way PBA managers sounded, they would not hesitate to leave the Big Dome if the sneaky Araneta deal with Beam was not shelved.

It was a Beam-or-Us situation the PBA had tried to drum up with its vow to pull out of the Big Dome.

***

Principle was at stake.

Beam reportedly paid Araneta as much as P12 million to have its shining product logo painted on the well-lit wooden court.

The way the PBA had sounded, it would not sell its prestige by vowing to the cheap marketing dictates of a low-end toothpaste product.

With the pull-out threat, it also became clear the PBA, this time, would fight to uphold a great heritage.

We remember how Rudy Salud, without batting an eyelash, pulled the PBA out of Araneta Coliseum in the 80s after Big Dome management cheated on the pro league.

That rotten deal, if memory serves, had something to do with the air-conditioning which Araneta management inexplicably pulled off after its new occupancy contract with the PBA had been signed.

***

Well, the years when Salud moved the PBA to the Ultra, now Philsports, proved to be the most colorful, most successful in pro league history hereabouts.

These years marked the most memorable in the mythical rise of the Barangay Ginebra franchise, headed by Sen. Robert Jaworski.

This only meant that there was no love lost between PBA old guards and Araneta management.

The PBA is the PBA, it could play anywhere here and still be a great hit.

For a while, it had seemed the PBA, with its new, young managers, would stick to its gun.

The bold PBA stand had taken against that backdoor try by both Araneta and Beam elicited a big applause from this reporter.

***

But here's the Big Damper.

Yesterday, we woke up to the news that the PBA had sold itself cheap.

It agreed to the Beam logo use on the Araneta Coliseum for a fee.

The buy-out sum was pegged at P5 million.

The PBA will stay put at the Big Dome.

The Beam logo will also be rammed down the throat of an unwilling public all year round.

Yes, the PBA had sold itself very cheap.

But it doesn't need a toothpaste. What the PBA needs to cure the stink is a strong astringent.

Fire after fire; no warning

From page A25

metropolitan area.

These authorities could not however say whether moves would be undertaken to help lessen the outbreak of these advance conflagrations.

So far, there has been no warning issued to alert and inform residents, mainly in congested squatter areas, on how to help lessen fire incidents as summer nears and the atmosphere heats up.

While no one was killed in yesterday's 30-minute fire that destroyed a three-story building near historic Binondo Church, a fireman was injured after debris fell on his face.

FO3 Marcos Roldan was wounded while trying to put out the blaze that started in the building owned by Co Her Realty on Hormiga St., Binondo, Manila, said Emmanuel Gaspar of the Manila Fire Department.

Roldan had cuts in his gums and lips while the conflagration destroyed P500,000 worth of property, Gaspar added.

Gaspar said the fire began at the the ground floor kitchen of the Asher Dumplings restaurant.

Gaspar said the cooks were busy preparing the day's meals when fire broke out at around 9:20 a.m.

Restaurant personnel and customers and the building's residents quickly evacuated the place.

The fire reached the fifth alarm at 9:36 a.m. The blaze burned four other establishments beside the building before it was put under control at 9:59 a.m.

Out in Malabon, a thousand informal settlers were rendered homeless in a two-hour fire that broke out in a densely populated slum community yesterday morning.

Police said the fire was triggered off by the explosion of a liquefied petroleum gas tank at the house of Milagros Bautista on Macaopa Road, Portero, Malabon.

FO2 Aldrino Torres of the Malabon Fire Department said the fire, which reached the general alarm, spread and destroyed some 700 houses. Damage was estimated at P15 million.

On Sunday, around P2 million worth of properties were destroyed after a fire broke out in Sta. Mesa, Manila.

The blaze began and spread from the Citaldas Warehouse at 3636 Ramon Magsaysay Ave.

No one was reported injured but flames spread and destroyed 16 to 20 other houses. With reports from Inquirer Research department

ALL DIGITAL SOUND AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS	1 DAREDEVIL	1 SWEPT AWAY (EXCLUSIVE) 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 1 DAREDEVIL 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15	THX 1 DAREDEVIL
2 AMAZON	2 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS	2 DAREDEVIL 11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 2 DAREDEVIL 1:45, 4:10, 6:35, 9:00, 11:25	2 DAREDEVIL
3 DAREDEVIL	THX GUARANTEED SEATS 3 DAREDEVIL 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	OGIE ALCASID: OA SA PUSO Feb. 21, 22, 28 & Mar. 1	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 HERO 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 DAREDEVIL	4 STOLEN SUMMER EXCLUSIVE SCREENING		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 TWO WEEKS NOTICE 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	4 ABANDON
	5 THE EYE		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30	5 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
	6 DAREDEVIL			
	7 ABANDON			

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2 (SDDS)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 (DTS)	DARE DEVIL
4 GOLD (DTS-ES)	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	THEY
6 GOLD (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	DAREDEVIL
8	MAGNIFICO
9	THE EYE
10	AMAZON

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
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1	
2	TOMAGANS
3 (DTS)	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	

Golden Pearl THX

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1	TOMAGANS
2	DAREDEVIL
3	

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1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2	AB NORMAL
3	TOMAGANS
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	DAREDEVIL
5	BUKANG BIBIG

METROPOLIS star
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3	DAREDEVIL
4	TOMAGANS
5	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
6	AMAZON

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(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2	

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to13

DAREDEVIL

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	HERO
2	I SPY

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515

1	
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	TOMAGANS

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	HERO
2	TOMAGANS
3	SHIRLEY
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
4	TOMAGANS
5	AMAZON
6	AB NORMAL
7 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
8 (SDDS)	ABANDON
9 (DOLBY)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	AB NORMAL
2	MAGNIFICO
3	TOMAGANS
4 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
5	AMAZON
6 (DOLBY)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
7 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
8	SUKDULAN
9	THEY

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	TOMAGANS
2 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
3 (DTS)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 (DOLBY)	DAREDEVIL
5	AB NORMAL

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2	AMAZON
3 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
4	TOMAGANS
5 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	DAREDEVIL

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	TOMAGANS

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	TOMAGANS
Lords	TOMAGANS
Jennet	

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	TOMAGANS
2	DAREDEVIL
3	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	DAREDEVIL
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	BUKANG BIBIG
4	TOMAGANS
5	AMZON

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	
2	

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	TOMAGANS
2	DAREDEVIL

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT **Araneta**

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	AB NORMAL
2	ABANDON
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
5 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
6	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
7	ABANDON

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	TOMAGUNS
2	DAREDEVIL

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
TEL. (049) 837-0926, 534-2185

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	AB NORMAL
3 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2 (DTS)	THEY
3 (DOLBY)	DAREDEVIL
4	HERO

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2 (DOLBY)	DAREDEVIL
3 (DTS)	HERO
4	WHITE OLEANDER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	SPECIAL SCREENING
2	AB NORMAL
3 (DOLBY)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	AB NORMAL
2	I SPY
3 (DOLBY)	THEY
4 (DTS)	

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	THEY
2 (DTS)	I SPY
3	AB NORMAL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
2	AB NORMAL
3 (DTS)	BUKANG BIBIG
4	TOMAGANS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	DAREDEVIL
2	AB NORMAL
3 (DTS)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	FEMME FATALE
5	BETTER THAN SEX

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	AB NORMAL
2	DAREDEVIL
3	

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	DAREDEVIL
2	FEMME FATALE
3	

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	AB NORMAL
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
4 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	BETTER THAN SEX
2	HERO
3	AB NORMAL

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	AB NORMAL
2	I SPY
3	DAREDEVIL
4	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	DAREDEVIL
2	AB NORMAL
3 (DTS-ES)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	FEMME FATALE

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) te (045) 887-0121

1	MAGNIFICO
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 (DOLBY)	SHAOLIN SOCCER
4 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL

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FESTIVAL CINEMA
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Daredevil
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SM CITY BACOOR
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1	AMAZON
2	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
3	DAREDEVIL
4	THEY
5	DAREDEVIL
6	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
7	LEGEND OF TOMAGAN
8	MAGNIFICO

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2	THE EYE
3	DAREDEVIL
4	AMAZON
5	DAREDEVIL
6	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
7	DAREDEVIL
8	THEY
9	ABANDON
10	MAGNIFICO

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	RING (JAPANESE)
2	HERO
3	MAGNIFICO
4	DAREDEVIL
5	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
6	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
7	DAREDEVIL
8	AMAZON
9	DAREDEVIL
10	THEY
11	SUKDULAN
12	LEGEND OF TOMAGAN

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	DAREDEVIL
2	THE EYE
3	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
5	ABANDON
6	DAREDEVIL
7	AMAZON
8	LEGEND OF TOMAGAN
9	DAREDEVIL
10	THEY
11	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
12	MAGNIFICO

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	DAREDEVIL
2	THEY
3	DAREDEVIL
4	THE EYE
5	ABANDON
6	EL CRIMEN DEL PADRE AMARO
7	AMAZON
8	MAGNIFICO
9	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
10	DAREDEVIL
11	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
12	AB NORMAL COLLEGE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	THEY
2	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
3	AMAZON
4	AB NORMAL
5	ABANDON
6	DAREDEVIL
7	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
8	DAREDEVIL

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	THE EYE
2	THEY
3	DAREDEVIL
4	ABANDON
5	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
6	DAREDEVIL
7	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
8	DAREDEVIL
9	MAGNIFICO
10	AMAZON

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	DAREDEVIL
2	BELOW
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	BETTER THAN SEX
5	MAGNIFICO
6	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
7	I SPY
8	DAREDEVIL

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
2	CLOSED
3	DAREDEVIL
4	BELOW
5	I SPY
6	DAREDEVIL
7	CLOSED
8	MAGNIFICO

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	DAREDEVIL
2	DAREDEVIL
3	FEMME FATALE
4	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
5	MAGNIFICO
6	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
2	DAREDEVIL
3	DAREDEVIL
4	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	DAREDEVIL
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	LEGEND OF TOMAGAN
4	AB NORMAL COLLEGE

SM CITY DAVAO
2976999

1	DAREDEVIL
2	BALAT SIBUYAS
3	THEY
4	MAGNIFICO
5	I SPY
6	DAREDEVIL

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1	DAREDEVIL
2	THEY
3	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	DAREDEVIL

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884

1	DAREDEVIL
2	MAGNIFICO
3	I SPY
4	DAREDEVIL

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-8976

1	DAREDEVIL 12:40 FS / 1:10 MF / 3:30 / 5:50 / 8:10 / 10:00 LFS / 10:30 LMF / 12:20 END
2	DAREDEVIL 11:00 MF / 11:20 / 1:40 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 8:40 / 10:30 LFS / 11:00 LMF / 12:50 END

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Galleria 632- 9115- 16 633- 7641 loc. 279

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2	DAREDEVIL
3	ABANDON
4	AMAZON
5	DAREDEVIL
6	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
7	EL CRIMEN DEL PADRE AMARO
8	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
9	HERO
10	THEY

MATINEE PRICE: P90 THX cinema / P75 level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita 536 -7809- 12

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2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	THE EYE
4	ABANDON
5	DAREDEVIL
6	AMAZON
7	DAREDEVIL

Metro East - Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1	THEY
2	DAREDEVIL
3	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4	HERO
5	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
6	DAREDEVIL
7	TOMAGANS
8	AMAZON

Novaliches 935- 3229 - 30

1	DAREDEVIL
2	DAREDEVIL
3	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	TOMAGANS
5	HERO
6	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
7	THEY
8	AMAZON

Malabon Citisquare 288-0985 / 288-2575

1	TOMAGANS
2	DAREDEVIL
3	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	AMAZON

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1927 961- 5318 / 5270

1	DAREDEVIL
2	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
3	FEMME FATALE
4	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
5	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
6	DAREDEVIL

Imus 471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	DAREDEVIL
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	AMAZON
4	DAREDEVIL
5	TOMAGANS
6	MAGNIFICO

Sta. Rosa Laguna 049-8370907

1	DAREDEVIL
2	MAGNIFICO
3	SHAGNHAI KNGIHTS
4	TRY SEVENTEEN
5	THEY

Bacolod 441- 0453 / 0459

1	DAREDEVIL
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3	THEY
4	I SPY
5	BETTER THAN SEX
6	AB NORMAL

Iloilo 336- 8077 - 78

1	DAREDEVIL
2	I SPY
3	MAGNIFICO
4	BELOW
5	8 MILE
6	DAREDEVIL

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS	1 DAREDEVIL	1 SWEPT AWAY (EXCLUSIVE) 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 DAREDEVIL 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15	THX 1 DAREDEVIL
2 AMAZON	2 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS	2 DAREDEVIL 11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 DAREDEVIL 1:45, 4:10, 6:35, 9:00, 11:25	2 DAREDEVIL
3 DAREDEVIL	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 DAREDEVIL 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	Onstage OGIE ALCASID: OA SA PUSO Feb. 21, 22, 28 & Mar. 1	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 HERO 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 DAREDEVIL	4 STOLEN SUMMER (EXCLUSIVE SCREENING)		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 TWO WEEKS NOTICE 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30	4 ABANDON
	5 THE EYE		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30	5 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
	6 DAREDEVIL			
	7 ABANDON			

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2 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 DARE DEVIL
4 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
5 THEY
6 DAREDEVIL
7 DAREDEVIL
8 MAGNIFICO
9 THE EYE
10 AMAZON

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1
2 TOMAGANS
3 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4
5
6
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMA ①②&③
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 , 833.3274

1 TOMAGANS
2 DAREDEVIL
3

starmall Movies
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1 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2 AB NORMAL
3 TOMAGANS
4 DOLBY DIGITAL EX DAREDEVIL
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METROPOLIS star
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1 AB NORMAL
2 SUKDULAN
3 DAREDEVIL
4 TOMAGANS
5 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
6 AMAZON

star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel 873.5004

1 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to13

DAREDEVIL

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 HERO
2 I SPY

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515

1
2 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 TOMAGANS

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1 HERO
2 TOMAGANS
3 SHIRLEY
4

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 DAREDEVIL
4 TOMAGANS
5 AMAZON
6 AB NORMAL
7 DAREDEVIL
8 ABANDON
9 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2 RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1 AB NORMAL
2 MAGNIFICO
3 TOMAGANS
4 DAREDEVIL
5 AMAZON
6 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
7 DAREDEVIL
8 SUKDULAN
9 THEY

Gotesco Commonwealth
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1 TOMAGANS
2 DAREDEVIL
3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 DAREDEVIL
5 AB NORMAL

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2 AMAZON
3 DAREDEVIL
4 TOMAGANS
5 DAREDEVIL

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 DAREDEVIL

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1 TOMAGANS

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson TOMAGANS
Lords TOMAGANS
Jennet

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 TOMAGANS
2 DAREDEVIL
3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 DAREDEVIL
2 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 BUKANG BIBIG
4 TOMAGANS
5 AMZON

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1
2

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 879.2029

1 TOMAGANS
2 DAREDEVIL

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821 8242 8400

1 AB NORMAL
2 ABANDON
3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 DAREDEVIL
5 DAREDEVIL
6 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
7 ABANDON

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821 8242 8400

1 TOMAGUNS
2 DAREDEVIL

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
TEL. (049) 837-0926, 534-2105

1 MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2 AB NORMAL
3 DAREDEVIL

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2 THEY
3 DAREDEVIL
4 HERO

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2 DAREDEVIL
3 HERO
4 WHITE OLEANDER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 SPECIAL SCREENING
2 AB NORMAL
3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1 AB NORMAL
2 I SPY
3 THEY
4

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 THEY
2 I SPY
3 AB NORMAL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 DAREDEVIL
2 AB NORMAL
3 BUKANG BIBIG
4 TOMAGANS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 DAREDEVIL
2 AB NORMAL
3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 FEMME FATALE
5 BETTER THAN SEX

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 AB NORMAL
2 DAREDEVIL
3

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1 DAREDEVIL
2 FEMME FATALE
3

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 AB NORMAL
2 TRY SEVENTEEN
3 DAREDEVIL
4 LORD OF THE RING

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 BETTER THAN SEX
2 HERO
3 AB NORMAL

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 AB NORMAL
2 I SPY
3 DAREDEVIL
4 TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03

1 DAREDEVIL
2 AB NORMAL
3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 FEMME FATALE

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887-0121

1 MAGNIFICO
2 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 SHAOLIN SOCCER
4 DAREDEVIL

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72

Daredevil
NOW SHOWING

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1 AMAZON
2 AB NORMAL COLLEGE
3 DAREDEVIL
4 THEY
5 DAREDEVIL
6 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
7 LEGEND OF TOMAGAN
8 MAGNIFICO

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2 THE EYE
3 DAREDEVIL
4 AMAZON
5 DAREDEVIL
6 AB NORMAL COLLEGE
7 DAREDEVIL
8 THEY
9 ABANDON
10 MAGNIFICO

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1 RING (JAPANESE)
2 HERO
3 MAGNIFICO
4 DAREDEVIL
5 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
6 AB NORMAL COLLEGE
7 DAREDEVIL
8 AMAZON
9 DAREDEVIL
10 THEY
11 SUKDULAN
12 LEGEND OF TOMAGAN

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 DAREDEVIL
2 THE EYE
3 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
5 ABANDON
6 DAREDEVIL
7 AMAZON
8 LEGEND OF TOMAGAN
9 DAREDEVIL
10 THEY
11 AB NORMAL COLLEGE
12 MAGNIFICO

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1 DAREDEVIL
2 THEY
3 DAREDEVIL
4 THE EYE
5 ABANDON
6 EL CRIMEN DEL PADRE AMARO
7 AMAZON
8 MAGNIFICO
9 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
10 DAREDEVIL
11 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
12 AB NORMAL COLLEGE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1 THEY
2 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
3 AMAZON
4 AB NORMAL
5 ABANDON
6 DAREDEVIL
7 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
8 DAREDEVIL

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1 THE EYE
2 THEY
3 DAREDEVIL
4 ABANDON
5 AB NORMAL COLLEGE
6 DAREDEVIL
7 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
8 DAREDEVIL
9 MAGNIFICO
10 AMAZON

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 DAREDEVIL
2 BELOW
3 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4 BETTER THAN SEX
5 MAGNIFICO
6 AB NORMAL COLLEGE
7 I SPY
8 DAREDEVIL

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1 AB NORMAL COLLEGE
2 CLOSED
3 DAREDEVIL
4 BELOW
5 I SPY
6 DAREDEVIL
7 CLOSED
8 MAGNIFICO

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 DAREDEVIL
2 DAREDEVIL
3 FEMME FATALE
4 AB NORMAL COLLEGE
5 MAGNIFICO
6 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1 AB NORMAL COLLEGE
2 DAREDEVIL
3 DAREDEVIL
4 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 DAREDEVIL
2 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 LEGEND OF TOMAGAN
4 AB NORMAL COLLEGE

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1 DAREDEVIL
2 BALAT SIBUYAS
3 THEY
4 MAGNIFICO
5 I SPY
6 DAREDEVIL

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1 DAREDEVIL
2 THEY
3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 DAREDEVIL

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884

1 DAREDEVIL
2 MAGNIFICO
3 I SPY
4 DAREDEVIL

THE PODIUM CINEMA

18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-8976

1 DAREDEVIL
12:40 FS / 1:10 MF / 3:30 / 5:50 / 8:10 / 10:00 LFS / 10:30 LMF / 12:20 END

2 DAREDEVIL
11:00 MF / 11:20 / 1:40 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 8:40 / 10:30 LFS / 11:00 LMF / 12:50 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 • Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate : P120.00 • After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

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MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS

@ Robinsons Malls

call-a-movie 536-7812

NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279

THX DAREDEVIL
10:15 MF, 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30 LMF
2 DAREDEVIL
3 ABANDON
4 AMAZON
5 DAREDEVIL
6 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
7 EL CRIMEN DEL PADRE AMARO
8 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
9 HERO
10 THEY

MATINEE PRICE: P90 THX cinema P75 Level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1 DAREDEVIL
2 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 THE EYE
4 ABANDON
5 DAREDEVIL
6 AMAZON
7 DAREDEVIL

Metro East - Marcos hway
682- 8193 / 8280

1 THEY
2 DAREDEVIL
3 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4 HERO
5 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
6 DAREDEVIL
7 TOMAGANS
8 AMAZON

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1 DAREDEVIL
2 DAREDEVIL
3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 TOMAGANS
5 HERO
6 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
7 THEY
8 AMAZON

Malabon
288-0985 / 288-2575

1 TOMAGANS
2 DAREDEVIL
3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 AMAZON

Star Mills- San Fernando, Pamp.
875- 1927
961- 5318 / 5270

1 DAREDEVIL
2 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
3 FEMME FATALE
4 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
5 MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
6 DAREDEVIL

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1 DAREDEVIL
2 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 AMAZON
4 DAREDEVIL
5 TOMAGANS
6 MAGNIFICO

Sta. Rosa Laguna
049-8370907

1 DAREDEVIL
2 MAGNIFICO
3 SHAGNHAI KNGIHTS
4 TRY SEVENTEEN
5 THEY

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1 DAREDEVIL
2 TRY SEVENTEEN
3 THEY
4 I SPY
5 BETTER THAN SEX
6 AB NORMAL

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1 DAREDEVIL
2 I SPY
3 MAGNIFICO
4 BELOW
5 8 MILE
6 DAREDEVIL

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NBN launches worldwide TV service

THE NATIONAL Broadcasting Network goes global starting next week.

Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will preside over the formal launch of NBN World on Wednesday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m. at the Hotel Intercontinental poolside, with a live telecast nationwide.

NBN World will start its global service on Monday, Feb. 24.

"This move is unprecedented and we're excited about this new window of opportunity and fresh challenge for the government network," says Mia Concio, NBN chair and president.

"In expanding its broadcast reach, NBN now becomes accessible to the rest of the world, particularly the millions of Filipinos overseas."

The president will switch the NBN facilities to global telecast and will be followed by a short dialogue with overseas Filipino workers in Australia via satellite.

"Advances in communication technology has made this satellite link possible and it is for the government to take advantage of its full potential," says Joey Isabelo, NBN general manager. "Following the government network's almost 30 years of broadcast history, this global expansion signals new directions for NBN."

The wide reaching satellite link will be through Australia's leading multi-cultural broadcaster, the Television and Radio Broadcasting Services (TARBS), which has 65, 24-hour TV channels using a comprehensive global satellite platform that covers major population regions in the world.

Teleports in Greece, Egypt and the United States downlink and uplink programming services of TARBS, with signals beamed to the Thaicom 3, PAS 10, PAS 8, PAS 2, AsiaSat, General Electric and Mabuhay Satellites.

"The Australian TARBS leads with this vast network that reaches out and binds the many cultures of the world," continues Concio. "Now with TARBS and NBN as partners, we have a window to the world."

Ed Finlan, head of program development, informs NBN news and public affairs, sports, entertainment and lifestyle programs will broadcast in real time on NBN World, morning, noon and evening, with a special English edition.

"Our hands are full with the preparation for three major newscasts and one foreign newscast," says Rudy Aquino of news department. "Vice President Teofisto Guingona joins NBN with his Lakbayani," he adds.

Also harnessed for the various news programs are Deo Macalma, Rod Nepomuceno, Martin Andanar and Bernadette Allyson.

New shows with Dina Bonnevie, Plinky Recto, Iya, Ali Alejandro, Dustin Reyes, and Atom Araullo, among others, will be launched, with the opening of the forthcoming PBA season.

Leading political, sports, advertising, entertainment personalities and close friends of the network are expected to attend the colorful and exciting launch of NBN World.

The NBN World launch special is produced for NBN by Arnold Vegafria and Chit Gatan, with Ruel Bayani as stage director and Ed Finlan directing for TV.

Hosts include Chiqui Roa, TJ Manotoc and Hans Montenegro. The event will be aired live nationwide and beamed throughout the world.

Band showdown at Brick Road

CALLING all amateur band groups. Show your stuff and jam at the party place this side of the metro and win big cash prizes.

Form a group with six members or more, male or female, ages 16 years old and above and fill out an entry form at the Ad and Promo Department, Basement Level Phase III, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall.

The group must not have any existing recording contract with any record label or competitor at the time of the contest.

Three groups will compete every Saturday night starting March 1. All winning groups will vie for the top prize on April 26, during The Brick Road's second anniversary celebration.

The event is cosponsored by Coca-Cola, Buffalo David Bitton and BNY Hip Shop.

For inquiries, call the Ad and Promo Department at 681-5401 local 109.

A LIMITED RETURN ENGAGEMENT
Feb. 19 & 20 only at Glorietta 4.

AYALA CINEMAS

"TWO THUMBS UP!"
— Ebert & Rouper

"The performances take the movie to a higher level."
— Desson Howe, WASHINGTON POST

Ben Affleck
Matt Damon Chris Moore
present
project greenlight's
STOLEN SUMMER
THE MOVIE

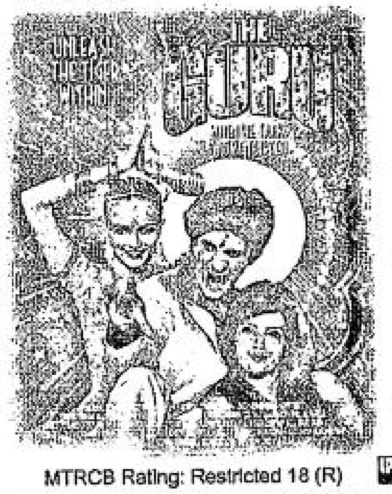
Stolen Summer by writer/director Pete Jones is the winner of the amateur filmmaking competition Project Greenlight. Kevin Pollak, Aidan Quinn, Brian Dennehy & child actor Max Weinberg stars in the story about a Catholic boy & a Jewish boy. When the Jewish boy finds out he's dying, he works with his friends to figure out how he can make sure he gets into heaven.

SKYFILMS

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

AYALA CINEMAS

OPENS FEB. 26 EXCLUSIVELY AT
ArtFilm
Greenbelt 1



THE GURU
HEATHER GRAHAM MARISA TOMEI
JIMI MISTRY

"Stirs together Bollywood and Hollywood, satire and romance, to create an appealing masala dish of a movie."
-- Robert K. Elder, CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"Mistry and co-star Heather Graham lend a fetching naiveté to their characters."
-- Carla Meyer, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

"THE GURU will leave you grinning from ear to ear."
-- Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE

SPECIAL THANKS TO:
NOKIA INQUIRER

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)

NOW SHOWING IN ALL AYALA CINEMAS

DAREDEVIL
MARVEL

AYALA CINEMAS

HOT TREATS AT GREENBELT 3

For every purchase of one (1) Daredevil ticket at Greenbelt3 entitles the customer to the following treats:

1. Up to 30% OFF on selected food items at all outlets.

TENDER BOB'S Chilanga Sbarro Nitas PAZZO Bellini's

Toast Gloria Maris Wok Shop Cheesecake, etc. Sabroso Matahari Indonesian Deli Bar Ciao Love Cakes by Claudette

2. FREE two (2) non-redemption game passes at TIMEZONE Greenbelt 3. Limited use of one pass per person per day only.

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PER DTI NCR Permit No. AI-104 Series of 2003.

Ayala Malls. Because you deserve more!

AYALA CENTER

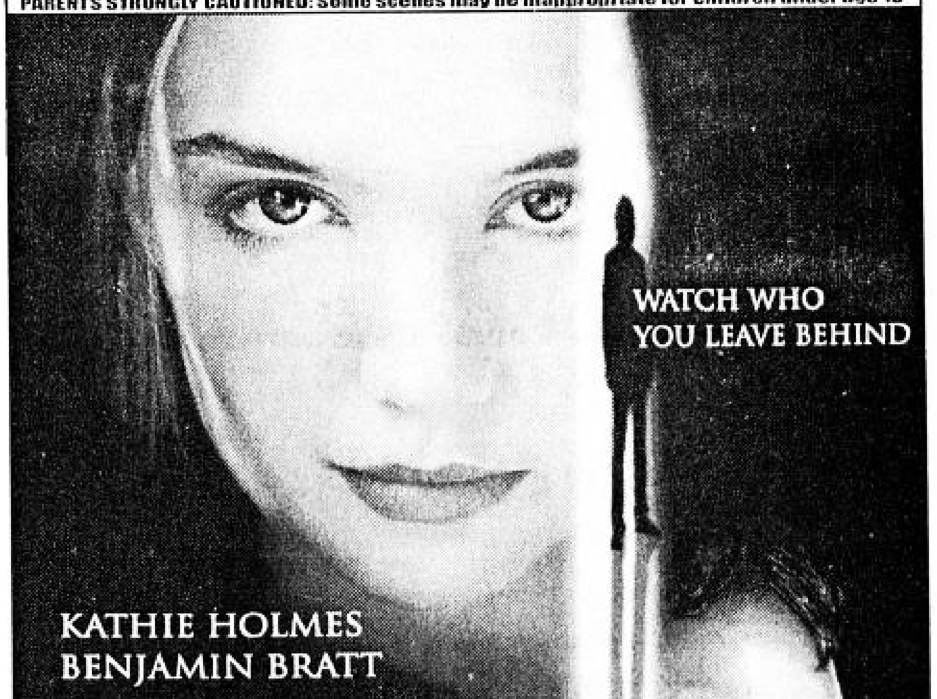
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed in accompanied by a parent or adult.

BEN AFFLECK JENNIFER GARNER
DAREDEVIL
MARVEL
WWW.DAREDEVILMOVIE.COM

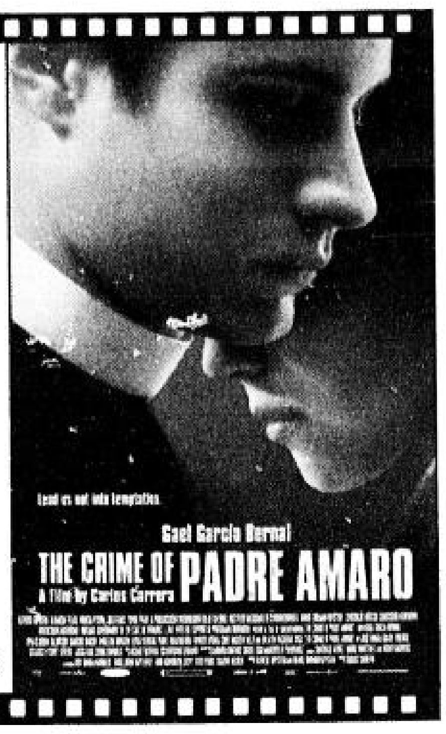
GRAND OPENING TODAY !

LOVE RADIO 90.7 AND BUENAVISTA INTERNATIONAL

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED: Some scenes may be inappropriate for children under age 13


WATCH WHO YOU LEAVE BEHIND
KATHIE HOLMES
BENJAMIN BRATT
ABANDON
PARAMOUNT PICTURES and SPYGLASS ENTERTAINMENT Present
A LYNDA OBST Production 'ABANDON' KATIE HOLMES
BENJAMIN BRATT CHARLIE HUNNAM ZOOEY DESCHANEL
GABRIELLE UNION GABRIEL MANN MELANIE LYNSKEY
WILL McCORMACK and FRED WARD
Music by CLINT MANSELL
Co-Producers ELIZABETH JOAN HOOPER SHANNON BURKE
Costume Designer LOUISE FROGLEY
Edited by MARK WARNER
Director of Photography MATTHEW LIBATIQUE
Executive Producer RICHARD VANE
Produced by LYNDA OBST EDWARD ZWICK ROGER BIRNBAUM GARY BARBER
Suggested by the Book 'Adam's Fall' by SEAN DESMOND
Written and Directed by STEPHEN GAGHAN

NOW SHOWING
AT THEATERS EVERYWHERE


Lead us not into temptation.
Gael Garcia Bernal
THE CRIME OF PADRE AMARO
A film by Carlos Carrera

SM CINEMA

NOW SHOWING

SM MEGAMALL CINEMA

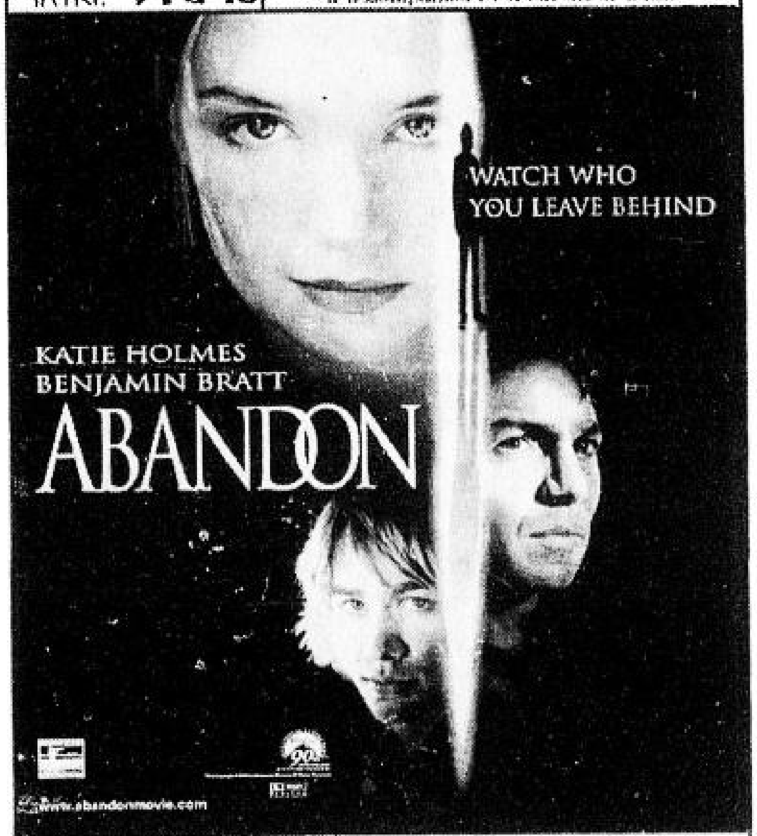
Starting on
February 15, 2003

MTRCB RATING: R18

For screening schedule, dial 833 9999

A THRILLER THAT WILL KEEP YOU GUESSING!
OPENS TODAY

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.



Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

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MTRCB RATING ▶ PG 13 | Children below 13 years old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

NOW SHOWING

NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed in accompanied by a parent or adult.

"THIS IS THE SEASON'S MUST-SEE ROMANTIC COMEDY." SWEET, SEXY, SASSY FUN! SIT BACK AND WATCH THE SPARKS FLY."
-Bill Bregoli, WESTWOOD ONE

"Sandra Bullock and Hugh Grant make a great team... you should see them again and again."
- Bonnie Churchill, National News Syndicate

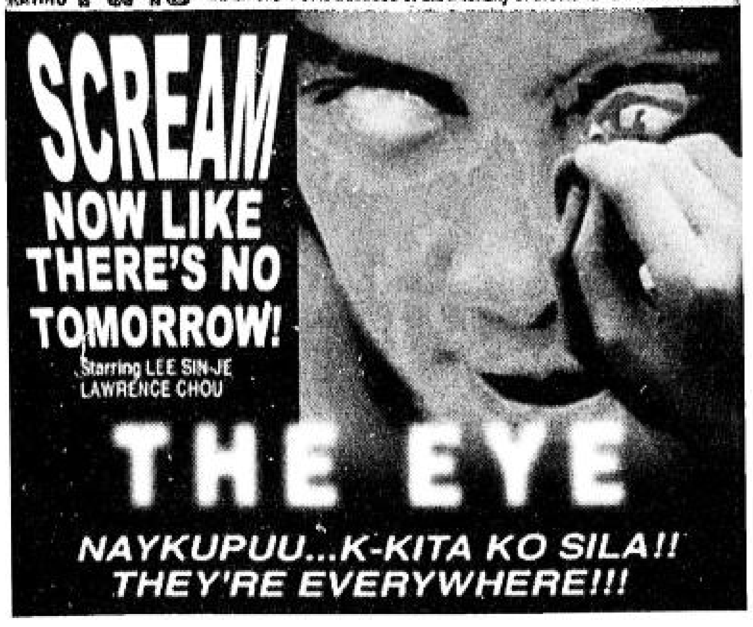
"Grant is first rate. Bullock is terrific."
- John Anderson, Newsday

hugh grant
two weeks notice
sandra bullock

A story about a man who had the girl of his dreams, and never even noticed.

NOW ON ITS 3RD HIT WEEK!
Exclusively at SM MANILA, SM MEGAMALL, SM NORTH, SM SOUTHMALL GLORIETTA, GALLERIA, ROBINSON ERMITA, FESTIVAL

MTRCB RATING PG 13 Parents are strongly cautioned not to bring children below 13 yrs. old to watch this movie because of the intensity of the horror & visual content.



OPENS FEBRUARY 26!

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON'S GREATEST ADVENTURE 'TREASURE ISLAND' AS IT HAS NEVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE

WALT DISNEY PICTURES PRESENTS
TREASURE PLANET
treasureplanet.com
©DISNEY ENTERPRISES, INC.

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

---

THEY'RE BACK!
DOUBLE THE FUN, DOUBLE THE ACTION OF SHANGHAI NOON
SECOND WEEK!

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED

JACKIE CHAN
OWEN WILSON
SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

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Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	AB NORMAL
Ali 2	AMAZON
Ali 3	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
Ali 4	DAREDEVIL
Ali 5	DAREDEVIL
Ali 6	THEY
Ali 7	ABANDON
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	TOMAGAN
Farmers 2	DAREDEVIL
ARANETA COLISEUM	
FEB 21 & 22	MARTIN & POPS CONCERT
FEB 23	PBA OPENING GAMES
MARCH 1	JOLINA MANIA CONCERT
ELEPHANT WORLD	
FEB 19	3 PM
FEB 20	10 AM
FEB 21	10 AM / 3 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	KAPAG BUMAYO PALAY / UNFAITHFUL CONCUBINE
ODEON	DAREDEVIL
ODEON-2	MALDITA / STRIP SHOW
ROBEN	BUKANG BIBIG
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	HALLOWEEN / ONE WRONG TURN
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	TOMAGAN
CORONET B	CHANGING LANES / THE WILD SIDE
QUEZON-1	BUKANG BIBIG
REMAR	DAREDEVIL
REMAR-2	BUKANG BIBIG
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	AB NORMAL
B	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
CINEMA-2	DAREDEVIL
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	TOMAGAN
CINEMA-2	SUKDULAN
CINEMA-3	MAGNIFICO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DAREDEVIL
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HERO
CINEMA-6	BUKANG BIBIG
CINEMA-7	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
CINEMA-8	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	DEREDEVIL
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DAREDEVIL
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
CINEMA-12	ABANDON
CINEMA-14	AMAZON
CINEMA-15	THEY
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LNES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

HERO **P13** 12:50,3:05,5:20, 7:35,9:50	**SHANGHAI KNIGHTS** **GP** 12:10,2:40,5:10, 7:40,10:10	**DAREDEVIL** **P13** 11:40,2:10,4:40, 7:10,9:40
ABANDON **R18** 12:45,2:55,5:05, 7:15,9:30	**TWO WEEKS NOTICE** **P13** 12:30,2:45,5:00, 7:15,9:30	**DAREDEVIL** **P13** 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30

MATINEE ₱80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1	**DAREDEVIL** **P13**
CINEMA 2	**SHANGHAI KNIGHTS** **GP**

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM

FEB 21-22 & 28, 2003	"MULA SA PUSOD (Pababa)"	9:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

Manay . . .

From page A31

hardly talk about politics during our family gatherings," Oreta shares. "The Aquinos are like that. You see our eyes meet and that already means politics."

This year, Oreta shows no let up in helping the show biz industry. Last month, she filed several bills as part of a three-pronged approach to help the entertainment sector.

She assured a broad coalition that she will work for the speedy deliberation of the anti-piracy bill.

Oreta believes piracy imperils over a hundred thousand jobs in entertainment and software industries, with the illegal reproduction of copyrighted works.

"These are the compelling reasons the government needs to undertake decisive steps to curb piracy," Oreta points out.

"Digital piracy could spell the collapse of the local film industry, which has seen a sharp decline in the number of locally produced films from 1997 to 2001. This is because of the government's failure to crack down hard on the illegal reproduction and distribution of pirated discs."

Oreta also made her stand against the 10 percent value-added tax to be imposed on professionals. Instead, she urged the administration to be strict in collecting loans from government financial institutions rather than imposing VAT on professionals.

Even in the investigation of the **Nida Blanca** murder case, Oreta challenged the government prosecutors to speed up the resolution of the 14-month old criminal case.

"So we can erase the public's perception that an ordinary citizen can expect nothing from the present justice system," Oreta reasons out. "If justice grinds slowly even for such high-profile cases, more people will lose faith and confidence in the government's capability to restore peace and order even for minor, unresolved crimes."

Appropriate arrests and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: I hear that you were in the States for more than 10 years?

Guest: Yes, I've just come back with my family.

Host: What were you doing in the States for all those years?

Guest: I was sinking political asylum.

(*Ay*, sinking...)

***

Host: Your concert will be held for the benefit of what?

Guest: It will raise funds to help deprave our beneficiaries' hospital expenses.

(*Ay*, deprave!)

***

Host: When will you solve this case? It's been more than a year already!

Guest: We already have some principal suspects in mind. Hopefully, soon enough, we can arrest them appropriately.

(What in the world is an appropriate arrest?)

***

Host: If you have a first date with the girl of your dreams, where would you take her?

Guest: For the first date, it's still getting to know you, so I will just take her in a coffee.

(How—sweet!)

***

Host: What can the Philippines offer tourists that other Asian countries can't?

Guest: So many, we have more and precisely above everything!

(*Ano daw?*)

***

Host: What is the goal of your group in your protest campaign against the VAT?

Guest: Not just deferral, but all the way to the absolution of the VAT!

(*Ay*, absolution!)

***

Host: *Ano ang hinihingi ninyo sa gobyerno?*

Guest: *Dapat, agaran ang suporta ng gobiyerno sa* international terrorism!

(What are you saying?!)

***

Host: Do you live near your office?

Guest: Of course, only a splitting distance away from it.

(*Ay*, splitting distance!)

***

Host: *Papano natin masusugpo ang prostitusyon?*

Guest: *Sa totoo lang, mahirap mahuli and prostitusyon. 'Pag makita mo ang babae at lalaki* together *'di* instantly *ibig sabihin*, prostitutor!

(*Ay*, prostitutor!)

***

Host: When you join a gay beauty contest, how do you hide your organ in the swimsuit competition?

Guest: Well, it takes skill.

Host: Really? Is it hard?

(No more questions—please!)

***

Host: What can we do to save our country at this difficult time in our history?

Guest: We should do our *kuwan* for our *bayan*!

(We're sorry we asked!)

'Matrix' 2 and 3—plus!

WITH a pair of "Matrix" sequels headed for movie screens this year, the film franchise's owners will maximize marketing opportunities by also releasing two "Matrix" DVDs—a compilation of nine animated shorts (including four already on the Net) called "The Animatrix," a revamped version of the first film, plus a video game. The animations provide the "back story" that bridges the three films.

First comes the free download of "The Second Renaissance: Part One," a nine-minute widescreen short. The segment is directed by **Mahiro Maeda**, who directed the Japanese animated series "Blue Submarine No. 6."

The shorts, developed in studios in Japan, Korea and the USA over three years, are logical expansions of the film series' reach because animé inspired the "Matrix" style and look. Timetable for release:

March 21, another "Animatrix" episode, "The Final Flight of the Osiris," a nine-minute film written by writer-directors **Andy** and **Larry Wachowski** and animated by **Andy Jones** ("Final Fantasy: The Spirit Within"), appears in theaters with the Warner film "Dreamcatcher."

April 29, "The Matrix Special Edition" two-disc DVD arrives, with all of the original extras from previous DVDs, plus "Preloaded," a new behind-the-scenes preview of "The Matrix Reloaded."

May 15, "The Matrix Reloaded," reuniting **Keanu Reeves**, **Carrie-Anne Moss**, **Laurence Fishburne** and **Hugo Weaving**, arrives in theaters. "Enter the Matrix," the video game, hits stores.

June 3, "The Animatrix" DVD is released. Reeves and Moss provide voicing for two shorts. Among the bonus features is history of animé.

Nov. 7, "The Matrix Revolutions" arrives in theater.

Manay Gina asserts role in life

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

AS WIFE of House Speaker **Joe de Venecia**, **Gina Vera-Perez de Venecia** is convinced her role in life is not to be a politician, too. She never attempted to steal the political limelight from her husband nor compete with him.

Manay Gina, as she is fondly called, has been content with helping from the sidelines, in her own little way.

"I believe there should only be one politician in the family," Manay Gina says. "I'm better off supporting my husband. I will never compete with him."

In championing her causes for children and women, Manay Gina inaugurated the Center for Children in Alabang, as part of her birthday celebration.

The center, which comprises four new buildings, is a project of the Congressional Spouses Foundation, with the help of Speaker De Venecia and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

"The center will serve as a shelter for street children, ages six to 15," informs Manay Gina. "We want to give them a home-like atmosphere, take care of them and give them the basic needs. We are going to put up a total of nine buildings in the area, including a rehabilitation center."

The Center for Children is similar to the Haven for Women which Manay Gina and the congressional spouses also put up in 1995.

"Today, the Haven for Women is being managed by the DSWD and has 15 regional centers all over the country," Manay Gina grants. "It has since rehabilitated over 5,000 women who became victims of rape, prostitution, wife battery, alcohol dependency and incest."

Six years ago, Manay Gina launched her TV career as host of the daily afternoon drama series, "Pira-Pirasong Pangarap," on GMA 7. The TV show made her step out of the shadow of politics and earn her niche in the entertainment industry.

"Pira-Pirasong Pangarap," which featured stories on abuses and survival of women, won the Stars Awards for TV's best drama series for five consecutive years.

However, "Pira-Pirasong Pangarap" is folding up this week to give way to a new TV drama anthology, "Nagmamahal, Manay Gina," which premieres on Monday, Feb. 24, 3:30 to 4 p.m.

The new TV show was conceptualized by **Marichu Vera-Perez Maceda**, with Manay Gina, **Lilibeth Nakpil**, **Joan Bañaga** and **Joey Abacan**.

"GMA decided it was time for us to change format, and I also believed it was time for me to move on," Manay Gina asserts. "I feel that I have given my personal best to advance the cause of the abused and survival of women."

"Nagmamahal, Manay Gina" will feature true-to-life and inspiring success stories of common people, especially women and children. The TV show will relate a story through of a series of daily episodes that will run for one week.

"This time, I will not just be narrating," Manay Gina says. "I will also give advice to the letter-sender at the end of the episode. I find fulfillment in being able to impart a lesson to victims of abuses.

"I believe that is my role in life, to champion the cause of women and children. JDV became house speaker again so I can finish all my projects for them."

"Nagmamahal, Manay Gina" will have the same team of noted directors who worked in "Pira-Pirasong Pangarap." They are **Joey Romero**, **Jeffrey Jeturian**, **Soxy Topacio**, **Gina Alajar**, **Albert Martinez**, **Ruel Bayani**, **Khryss Adalia** and **Manny Castañeda**.

Manay Gina proudly talks about her set, created by noted production designer **Tatus Aldana**.

Tatus converted an area in Manay Gina's house (in Dasmariñas Village, Makati) into a pocket garden and that's where she tapes her opening and closing spiels for the TV show.

"It's like I'm in Bali because Tatus designed it with flowers all around me," Manay Gina says.

She will be seen henceforth in what she calls her trademark white blouse and denim pants get-up.

"Nagmamahal, Manay Gina" also has a radio version on dzBB-AM, which has the same format as the TV production, but features an entirely different story every week. The radio program will also be interactive, as listeners get to participate in formulating the right conclusion for each episode every Saturday.

"We don't just stop after we've featured the story," Manay Gina allows. "We will offer help and will help pursue the case."

Viewers are encouraged to send true-to-life success stories to "Nagmamahal, Manay Gina" at No. 27 Sampaguita Pictures Compound, Ortigas Avenue Extension, Quezon City.

From senator to TV producer?

SHOW BIZ SUPPORTER. Sen. Tessie Aquino Oreta does her share in helping the ailing entertainment industry.

EVEN if she's not from show biz, Sen. **Tessie Aquino-Oreta** has been doing her share to help the ailing entertainment industry.

Last year, she proposed to cut amusement taxes for film by half, from 30 to 15 percent. She urged mall owners to join the campaign against piracy and also convinced local government units (LGUs) to follow Manila's lead in cutting film amusement tax.

She backed up the creation of a Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB) under Senate Bill No. 2049, which will review a film based on its direction, screenplay, cinematography, editing, production design, music scoring, sound and acting to determine how a film should be rated, whether or not it deserves to be granted incentives as specified under the proposed law.

She also cited the need for a new film rating system to encourage production of quality movies.

In April last year, Oreta pushed for the creation of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) to provide incentives to the movie industry. Pres. **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** signed the law, known as Republic Act 9167, in 9167.

FULFILLING JOB. Gina de Venecia takes on the cause of women and children.

Entertainment has always been close to the heart of Oreta. In fact, she had always wanted to become a producer, not of films, though, but of a tele-novela.

If she decides not to run for a second term, the opposition senator is most likely to turn TV producer.

"It has always been my dream to produce a tele-novela," Oreta says.

On Sundays, after her regular reunion with her in-laws, Oreta finds time to enjoy show biz programs like "The Buzz," "Sharon" and "Mel and Jay."

"The Oretas are not a political clan, so we

MANAY/ A30

War movies therapeutic, helpful to kids . . .

From page A32

Sufficiently cleaned up for the HBO-Asia market, "Three Kings" depicted the few days after the US forces had successfully landed in Iraq during the Gulf War.

The US coordinated a United Nations reprisal against Iraq for invading the kingdom of Kuwait.

The movie stars George Clooney, Ice Cube, Mark Wahlberg and Spike Jonze. Clooney's marine character devises a plan to steal Kuwaiti gold, which Hussein supposedly hoarded in several secret niches throughout Baghdad after the invasion.

Political nuances

But the US soldiers ended up absorbing the political, sociological and philosophical nuances of that American war against Iraq.

"Three Kings" had been shown by HBO, Star Movies, the Japanese satellite-fed Wowow, and South African movie channel MNET, informed Bryan.

"It made me (realize) that Iraqis are good-natured people, too. I think (the movie) was telling me, 'Hey, this is not a good war'," he said.

Recently, HBO also showed one of the 1980s critically panned movies, "Best Defense," which was set near the Kuwaiti border.

The movie plot runs the two parallel storylines of Dudley Moore, who plays the eccentric inventor of a hydraulic sphere used in a new tank, and Eddie Murphy as the nervous tank commander tasked to drive it years later.

Moore plotline

The plot is driven largely by Murphy's crisis with the tank and a crew of Kuwaiti soldiers, which the Moore plotline explains and resolves.

Both Star Movies and Japan's Wowow have broadcast one of the most fervent anti-war movies of the 20th century: Francis Ford Coppola's "Apocalypse Now" and its director's cut, "Apocalypse Now Redux."

Filmed in Pagsanjan, Laguna back in the 1970s, "Apocalypse Now" follows the strange psychedelic journey of young soldier Martin Sheen, who is tasked to assassinate a psychotic American commander played by Marlon Brando in the stark jungles of Vietnam.

Brando, it turns out, had been maddened by the vicious Vietnam War.

In January, Wowow also previewed the 1990s CBS movie "Fail Safe," where a botched computer program mistakenly sends a US air fleet to attack Russia.

The US president allows Russia to nuke New York as atonement, when America fails to stop a US jet from bombing Russia's capital city.

Prophetically

But the most disturbing anti-war movie yet is a 1997 independent film that describes rather prophetically how the US war against Iraq could end.

"Deterrence" was screened by MNET in early February. It depicts a future US president, played by Kevin Pollack, who decides to end America's feud with Saddam Hussein. Hussein's son now runs that country, and has a few nuclear missiles aimed squarely against key cities across the world.

Pollack orders the US military to launch a nuclear attack against Iraq. Flying to a town that is targeted by Iraq, Pollack holes up with a team of the Secret Service inside a roadside Midwestern café, where he encounters a polarity of discussions about bombing Iraq.

The anti-war sentiment of several of the café characters fails to sway Pollack, even when it causes a small gunfight. By the time the Iraqis launch their attacks, both the café characters and the viewers realize that none of the Iraqi missiles had exploded.

Conclusion

Pollack explains that America had decided to destroy deterrence—the balance of power that relies on the principle that mutual destruction is the only plausible conclusion to a nuclear war waged by armed nations.

Pollack tells a dumbfounded audience that he had deceived Iraq by selling them defective nuclear missiles through France, which remains in reel and in real life as the critic in America's war against Iraq.

By provoking Iraq, Pollack's ruffled president says America has become the only superpower in the world left with the ability to actually use these weapons of mass destruction.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

War movies therapeutic, helpful to kids watching US-Iraq war, says psychologist

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Media are genuinely anti-war, making news telecasts and cable channel movies, which young adults tend to watch these days, blissfully therapeutic against a backdrop of American aggression against Iraq.

Letty Miana, a psychologist of gender rights advocate Ebgan Inc., said the anti-war sentiment provides Filipino youth with sufficient forewarning about the perils of global military conflicts.

The psyche of Filipino children, she said, is vulnerable to the escalating fears "being bombarded by the media" about United States President George W. Bush's war posturing against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Blatant anti-war commentaries have been broadcast lately by news networks like ABS-CBN News Channel (ANC) and GMA 7, and these are "fortunate developments" for children, Miana noted.

Classic putdowns

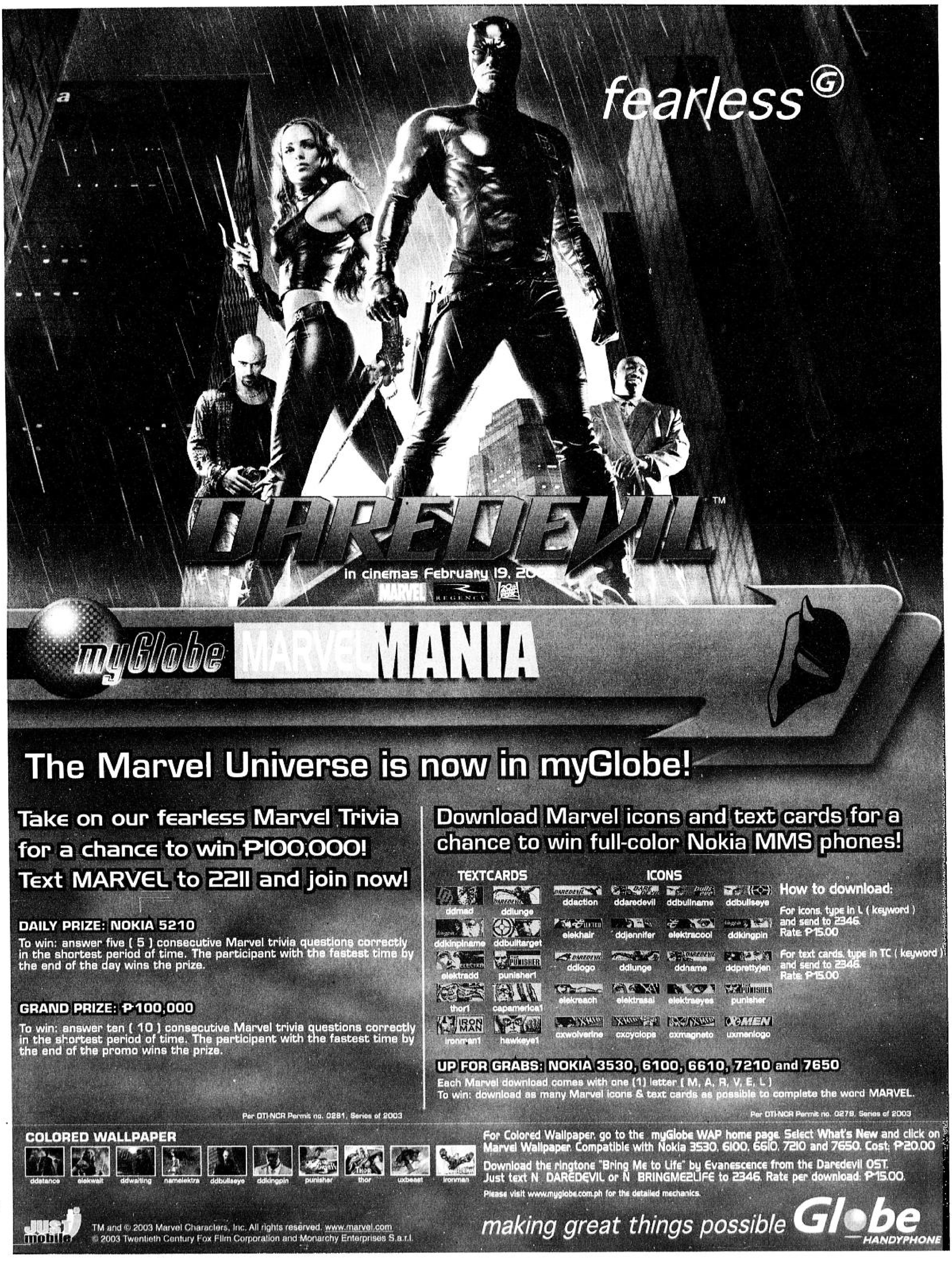
Veteran broadcaster Frank Evangelista, for example, deconstructed the US-Iraqi conflict with his classic putdowns on one of ANC's daily editorials.

But it is the wealth of American movies, showcased over cable channels beamed from Japan, South Africa and Hong Kong, which gives children, teenagers and Filipino couch potatoes the best arguments yet against a US war against Iraq.

Bryan, 12, a high school student, said he is allowed to stay up and watch HBO and Star movies like "Three Kings," which he described as "the reason (former US President George Bush Sr.) invaded Iraq in 1983."

WAR/ A31

GULF WAR. George Clooney, Mark Wahlberg and Ice Cube in "Three Kings."



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BSP acts to ease impact of war on OFWs

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has prepared measures to mitigate the impact of the US-Iraq hostility on the 1.3 million Filipinos working in the Middle East and their families.

The BSP said it would open a liquidity facility for banks that were willing to extend emergency cash assistance to the families of affected OFWs. It said it would also agree to change Iraqi and Kuwaiti dinars brought home by OFWs who might be evacuated.

Also being considered is a special arrangement with foreign correspondent banks in facilitating the transfer of the remittances of these workers.

These were among the strategies identified in yesterday's meeting between BSP officials and the Iraq Crisis Management Committee led by National Security Adviser Roilo Golez. The committee has been meeting with different government agencies to identify measures that could mitigate the effects of the looming war in the Middle East on important segments of the economy including fuel supply, trade and OFW remittances.

Overseas workers, including those in the Middle East, sent home some $7 billion in remittances last year. The central bank relies on these workers' remittances in building up the country's gross international reserves and in shielding the peso from speculative attacks.

The peso dropped to a new 19-month low of 54.20 to $1 yesterday, a notch down from 54.199 last Monday.

"The central bank, with the approval of the Monetary Board, can open a liquidity window for banks that are willing to lend to the families of the OFWs in the event their remittances are affected by the situation in the Middle East, " said BSP Deputy Governor Armando Suratos.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said a similar strategy was being considered for implementation if OFW remittances were to be adversely affected by the sanctions that might be imposed on the country by the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force.

The central bank opens a liquidity window whenever need arises. It opened such a window at the height of "Y2K scare" in late 1999, during the juetengate scandal in October 2000 and right after the Sept.11 terrorist attacks.

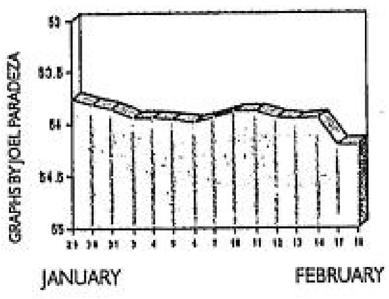
Suratos said the BSP would also agree to change Iraqi and Kuwaiti dinars brought home by overseas workers who might be evacuated due to the looming US-Iraq war.

Suratos said the central bank adopted the same tack during the Gulf War in the early 1990s.

BSP/B6

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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As of 5 p.m., Feb. 18, 2003

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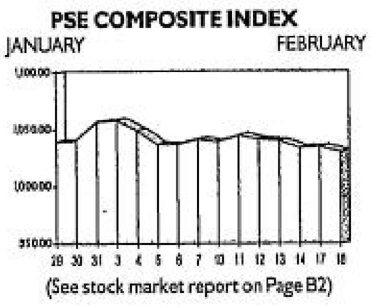
STOCK MARKET

Stocks down on war jitters, laundering law concerns



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES ended lower yesterday on the country's failure to meet global standards in fighting money laundering and worries over a possible war in the Middle East, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 4.12 points, or 0.4 percent, at 1,030.64, after rising 1.03 points Monday.

"The market continues to deal with war jitters in Iraq and concerns over possible sanctions from the FATF," BPI Securities senior manager Roberto Cano told Dow Jones Newswires. "The uncertainty is still there because those issues haven't been resolved, although in terms of timing, the prospect of war may have been moved back a bit."

The country has a month to pass amendments to the Anti-Money Laundering Law to meet global standards set by the Paris-based global watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Failure to do so could mean sanctions that may further curtail the flow of investment into the country.

The combination of domestic and overseas problems also weighed on the peso and put pressure on interest rates to move up, traders said. The dollar closed at its highest level in 25 months Monday.

Banks also tried to bid up interest rates during Monday's treasury bill auction, forcing the Bureau of Treasury to reject all offers.

Bank of the Philippine Islands was the most actively traded stock, down P1.50, or 4.4 percent, at P32.50. Traders said concerns over the impact of possible sanctions on local banks' earnings over the money laundering law may have taken its toll on the stock. *AP*

Gov't poised to cancel regular treasury auctions

THE BUREAU of Treasury yesterday threatened to cancel the auctions of government securities to penalize the market which continued to bid up rates.

The auction committee led by the Treasury rejected all bids for the four-year bonds yesterday but accepted P2 billion worth of offers for 20-year bonds. Last Monday, the government also turned down all bids for treasury bills. It likewise rejected offers for two-and-three-year bonds weeks ago.

"We can afford to reject (bids) until July and we may consider canceling the auctions if the market will insist on behaving irrationally and submitting unreasonable bids," said National Treasurer Sergio Edeza.

The treasurer said the auction committee would decide next week if it would proceed with the sale of regular bills and bonds or simply issue special notes like the retail treasury bonds.

"If bids next week will remain unreasonable, we might as well cancel the auctions," he stressed.

Banks tried to push the four-year yield up by 1.43 percentage points to 11.5 percent. Their offers for the 20-year bond pushed up the rate by 15 basis points to 13 percent.

There is no logic with the way the market is bidding. In a war scenario, you don't buy long-term assets but the banks were bidding reasonably for the 20-year bonds," he said.

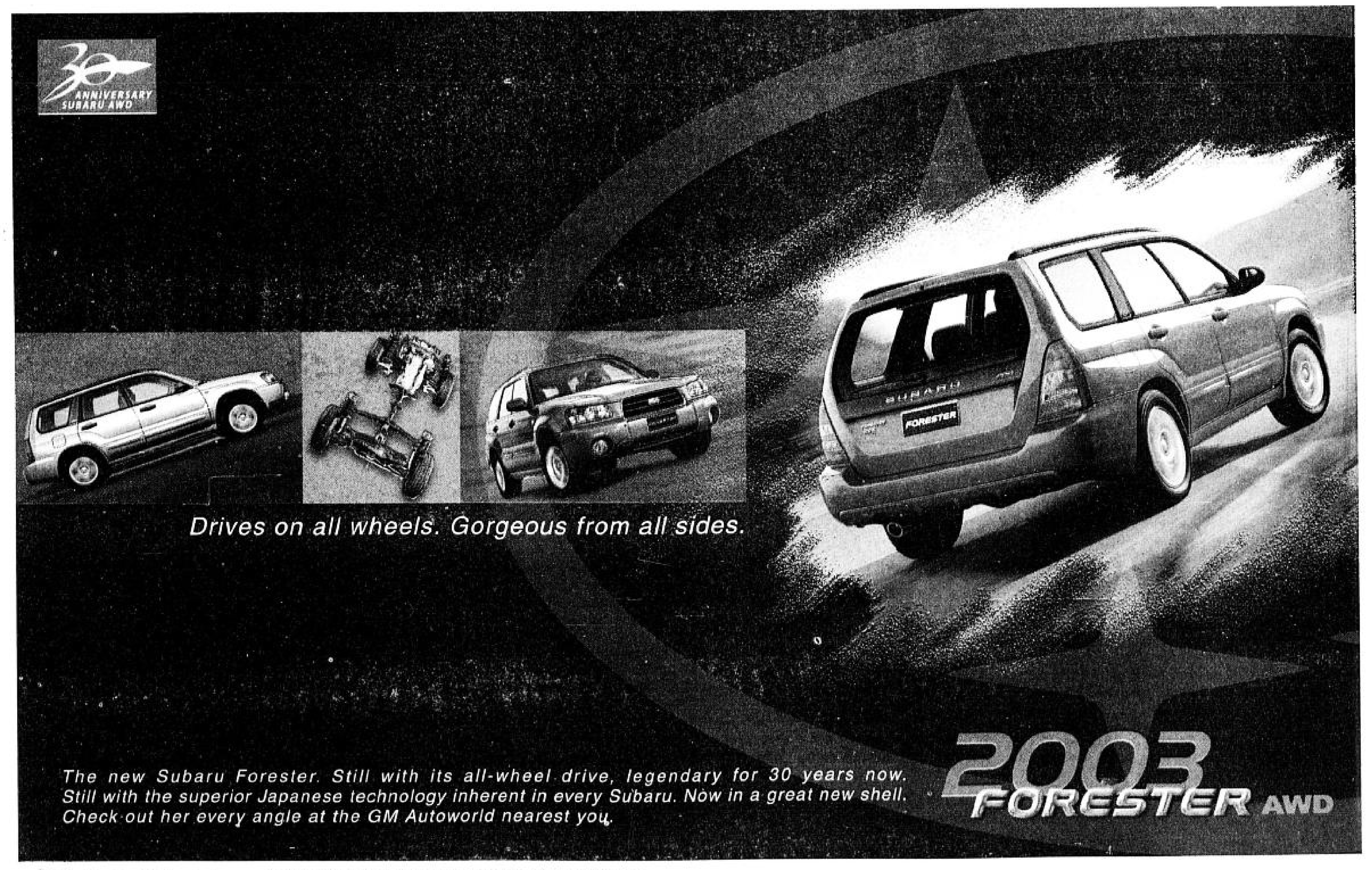
If the market persists on bidding high for government securities, Edeza said the government will tap other markets.In fact, he said that the Treasury was already lining up the sale of some P20 billion worth of retail bonds in April.

A trader from a foreign bank, however, said that the market could shift to dollar instruments to cash in on the strength of the greenback. *Clarissa S. Batino*

POOR PROFITS

A VENDOR counts his small earnings at a public market. Market vendors complain of poor profit as shares ended lower yesterday on the country's failure to meet global standards in fighting money laundering and worries over a possible war in the Middle East. The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 4.12 points, or 0.4 percent, at 1,030.64, after rising 1.03 points Monday.

AFP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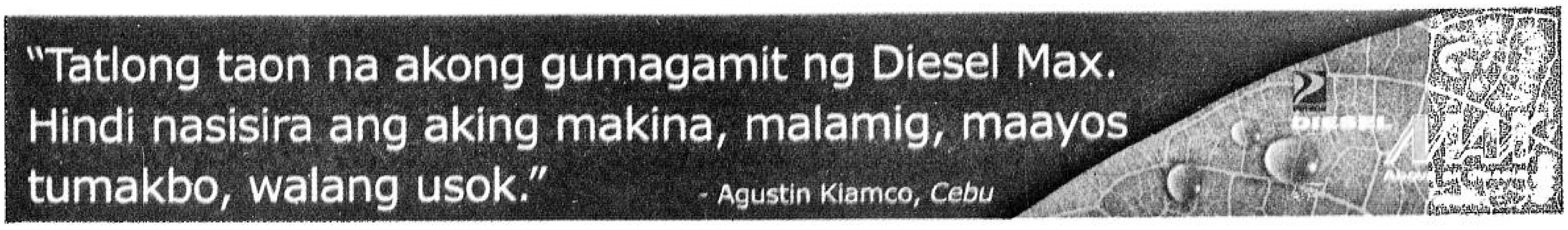
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'Plastics king' buys Manila Pavilion Hotel from HK firm

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GATCHALIAN family's hotel arm, Waterfront Philippines Inc., has acquired a 75.6-percent stake in Acesite (Philippines) Hotel Corp., owner of the Manila Pavilion Hotel.

Stock analysts said since the hotel's assets had a book value of at least P1 billion, the Gatchalian family took over the property at a huge discount.

Based on Waterfront's disclosure, the deal involved a total purchase price of only P124 million.

In a disclosure, Waterfront corporate secretary Arthur Ponsaran said his company acquired 74.89 million out of 99 million outstanding Acesite shares, and that Waterfront would make a tender offer to minority shareholders at P1.66 each.

The tender offer requirement, which aims to protect minority shareholders from unfair dilution, requires a party buying a controlling block in a listed company to give other investors the option to sell out at the same price.

Ponsaran said Waterfront's acquisition of a controlling stake in Manila Pavilion was "in line with the expansion plans of the company based on an expanded geographical coverage for the company's hotel and casino operations."

Waterfront executive vice president Rexlon Gatchalian said the new acquisition was part of Waterfront's expectations of a rebound in the tourism industry in the next couple of months.

"Our three properties, especially our flagship hotel in Cebu, have all been experiencing near 100-percent occupancy rates," Gatchalian said.

The Manila Pavilion is a 600-room hotel with 2,000 square meters of gaming area.

Waterfront already owns three hotels—two in Cebu and one in Davao.

The Gatchalian family has bought a controlling stake in Acesite from British Virgin Island-based Acesite Ltd. that, in turn, is owned by South Port Development Ltd., which has experience in running leisure facilities in mainland China and Australia.

Earlier this month, Hong Kong-based holding firm Sino-i.com Ltd. bought 100 percent of South Port Development.

Sino-i.com bought the stake at the equivalent of P19.79 per Acesite share.

GATCHALIAN

No intervention to lift peso, BSP chief says

By Clarissa S. Batino

BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said yesterday the central bank was not considering an interest rate hike to try and arrest a slide in the local currency.

"Interest rates are not a cure for exchange rate fluctuations. The exchange rate volatility is temporary, especially if we can correct the deficiencies besetting us," Buenaventura told reporters.

On Monday, the peso touched a 19-month low of 54.20 against the dollar before recovering slightly by the close.

The peso has lost about 1.6 percent of its value so far this year. It is down nearly 9 percent since last May.

Dollar buying ahead of a possible war in Iraq as well as fears the country will be hit with financial sanctions next month have been putting pressure on the peso.

Buenaventura has said he remains hopeful that Congress will be able to make changes to the country's anti-money laundering law in time to avert threatened sanctions by a global dirty money watchdog in March.

He added that using higher rates to mop up excess liquidity in the banking system to stave off possible speculation against the peso could have a damaging effect on economic growth.

"We have to keep liquidity sufficiently available to help the economy," he said.

The bank has kept its key overnight borrowing rate at 7.0 percent and its lending rate at 9.25 percent since March 2002.

SEC shuts down Five Vision, subsidiaries

By Michelle V. Remo

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has shut down four investment companies for their allegedly unauthorized investment activities.

Documents released yesterday by the SEC identified the shuttered firms as Five Vision Consultancy Inc., Intercontinental Services Inc., Conrad Group and Associates Inc. and Servlink Cargo Inc.

These companies allegedly offered securities and solicited investments from the public without the SEC's approval.

Government regulators said Five Vision offered investors a guaranteed monthly interest of 15 percent for a minimum investment of P50,000, exceeding limits set under the Securities Regulation Code.

They added that Five Vision, after it was investigated by the Commission for unauthorized investment activities, used its allied companies—Intercontinental Services Inc., Conrad Group and Associates Inc., and Servlink Cargo Inc.—to continue soliciting investments from the public.

The closure of Five Vision and its subsidiaries came after the SEC filed estafa charges against the Tibayan group of companies with the Department of Justice last week.

Defense chief confirms talks to mine PMA lands

BAGUIO CITY—The government has been negotiating with mining firms on the exploration of potential mineral sites at Fort Del Pilar, home of the Philippine Military Academy here, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and academy officials have said.

Retired Maj. Gen. Rufo de Veyra, a former PMA superintendent, told the INQUIRER that the possibility that the PMA concealed vast mineral resources had intrigued the government despite objections from military officials like former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva.

Reyes on Saturday said he had been discussing the PMA's mining potentials with Dennis Belmonte, former president of Benguet Corp.

The PMA received a formal offer from Gerald Brimo, chair of Philex Mining Corp., on March 25 last year to open exploration activities at a hillside near the PMA compound. The site sits near a property of Philex.

According to Brimo's letter to Villanueva, the AFP stands to gain a 1-percent royalty share from a PMA mine operation along "the eastern periphery of Fort del Pilar, (which) covers only 13 percent of the entire military reservation."

The military's royalty share is estimated to reach P150 million annually for 20 or more years, or roughly P3 billion, from the operation that will be managed by international mining giant Anglo American Inc.

The joint venture led to the formation of the Northern Luzon Exploration and Mining Co., which also applied for a mineral production sharing agreement (MPSA) covering 3,000 hectares of land that included Sitio Ansagan in Tuba, Benguet, and Camps 1, 3 and 4 along Kennon Road.

Neoman de la Cruz, Cordillera director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, said he would block any efforts to exploit gold found near the Baguio territory.

Reyes said he had yet to make any decision regarding the offers.

"Let us see because we want to know exactly how it will affect the PMA situation. We need to know what the reserves are. We have a lot of studying and exploring to do)," he said.

"It had been proposed to us several times, but the talks were always stalled," he added.

The identified PMA mineral sites are adjacent to Philex's Padcal operations in Tuba, which have been undergoing a 10-year winding up term since 1997.

"(The PMA offer) is an exploration venture because while we see the potential, we do not know what they really are until we look. We know there may be high mineral opportunities in this region," a Philex official said here.

De Veyra said he endorsed the offer to Reyes after noting that President Macapagal-Arroyo already supported the revival of mining. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Gokongwei firm slashes IDD rates

DIGITAL Telecommunications Philippines Inc. has reduced its international direct distance dialing rates to a flat 40 US cents a minute, except for countries that still have a monopolistic telecommunications environment.

Before the rate adjustment, IDD calls were charged 40 US cents to $1.20 a minute, depending on the country of destination.

The new flat rate applies to major destinations like the United States, Canada, Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Italy, United Kingdom, Australia and Taiwan.

Digitel senior vice president William Pamintuan said the rate reduction was done to encourage Digitel subscribers to make more IDD calls.

"The volume of IDD traffic is quite low. We reduced our rates to induce outbound traffic," he said in an interview.

Digitel subscribers in all of the company's service areas can now avail of the flat rate. Users of Digitel's payphone service can likewise avail of the new rate.

The Gokongwei-owned firm has also cut rates for its Digikard payphones. From a previous rate of P2 per minute, Digikard users can now make local calls to both Digitel and non-Digitel phones for just P1 a minute.

This new rate also applies to intra-province calls.

Digitel's national direct distance dialing calls, meanwhile, continue to be priced at P3.30 a minute for Digitel-to-Digitel calls, and P4.40 for calls to non-Digitel landlines.

Fraport suit a mistake, Yasay says

GERMAN airport operator Fraport AG will be making a big mistake if it sues the Philippine government to recover its investments in the controversial Naia Terminal 3 project, according to MIA-Naia Association of Service Operators chair Perfecto Yasay Jr.

Yasay said Fraport was part of the problem, being part of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc., but it could also be part of the solution since it had the expertise and the funds needed to fast-track the completion of the stalled project.

Yasay said suing the Philippine government would transform Fraport into a hostile party, making it politically difficult and incorrect for the government to even think of Fraport as part of the solution.

STI to train US-bound Filipino nurses

STI Education Services Group and Universal Workers Inc., a review and training company based in the United States, have formed a joint venture that will focus on training Filipino nurses and providing them jobs in hospitals in the United States.

The joint venture is seen addressing the growing shortage of nurses in the United States as well as the unemployment problem in the country.

James Wolf, vice president of BreOn America, the company tasked by STI-Universal Inc. with the immigration process of Filipino nurses to be sent abroad, said the shortage of nurses in the United States stood at 125,000.

The figure, he said, will grow by 75,000 to 100,000 a year if the United States fails to address the shortage problem.

He explained that the shortage was brought about by demographic concerns. At present, a large part of the US population consists of people aged between 30 and 45.

IT industry sets sights on $62-B outsourcing market

INFORMATION technology industry leaders have launched a drive to develop and promote the Philippines as a hub for "offshore business process outsourcing," which they believe will fuel global IT growth and become a $62-billion market in five years.

The Philippines is uniquely placed to capture a lot of this growth because of its deep pool of workers who speak English and are technology-proficient, Roberto Romulo, chair of the Digital Philippines foundation, said.

In a speech, Romulo said outsourcing represented the next growth area that could bolster and strengthen the country's export sector now heavily geared toward electronic products.

Gartner Inc. estimated that outsourcing by companies of various non-corporate services at $100 billion worldwide in 2000 and should reach $178 billion by 2008.

Of this amount at least $62 billion will go to offshore providers in countries like India, Ireland, Canada and the Philippines.

Digital Philippines has launched a campaign to lure more of this offshore outsourcing into the Philippines, creating a marketing arm—Outsource Philippines Inc.—to promote Philippine capability in business process outsourcing to the world. The campaign kicked off on Feb. 13 at a chief executives' forum attended by top executives from technology firms, organizations and the diplomatic community.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, February 18, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16	16.25	16	16.25	49,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	33.5	33.5	32.5	32.5	1,093,900
China Banking Corp.	635	635	635	635	3,520
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	24.5	24.75	24.5	24.5	103,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	29	29	29	29	39,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	3,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1290	1300	1285	1300	4,780
Sun Life Financial Serv.	950	960	950	960	1,510
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	800
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	440,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	1,000,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	295	297.5	295	297.5	92,090
Philweb Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	3,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.3	8.4	8.2	8.4	21,000
Manila Electric Co. B	12.25	12.75	12.25	12.5	1,193,700
Petron Corp.	1.66	1.68	1.66	1.68	573,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1	1	1	1	180,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	259,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.38	2.38	2.38	2.38	142,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	2	2	2	2	4,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.12	2 12	2.12	2.12	4,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	164,900
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	70,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	218,400
San Miguel Corp. B	64.5	65.5	64.5	65 5	281,700
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	110,000
Ayala Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	238,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.34	2.32	2.32	7,003,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.58	200,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	10,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	80,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.12	0.125	0.12	0.125	3,020,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	320,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.4	166,000
Ionics Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.16	1.16	770,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	10,000
Music Corp.	0.17	0.18	0.165	0.165	2,450,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	1,180,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	200,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.25	14.75	14.25	14.75	67,400
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	430,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.43	320,000
Manila Jockey Club	8	8	8	8	1,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Jollibee Warrants	16	16	16	16	600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	2,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.75	4.8	1,087,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	450,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	200,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.93	0.93	1,410,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	500,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	23,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.4	4,315,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	190,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	300,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	3,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1,600,000
OIL					
Interport Res. B	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	85,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	17,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,312,110	50,123,200.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	24,887,890	100,766,540.00
PRO	7,985,000	29,935,700.00
Mining	5,190,000	605,600.00
OIL	104,000,000	247,600.00
GRAND TOTALS :	143,375,000	181,678,640.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	354.32	DOWN 5.95
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,484.80	DOWN 0.92
PRO	454.91	DOWN 0.73
Mining	1,168.07	DOWN 15.83
OIL	1.06	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	640.89	UP 13.52
Composite	1,030.64	DOWN 4.12

NO. OF ADVANCES: 13; NO. OF DECLINES: 26; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 37; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 76; NO. OF TRADES: 1,110

CURRENCIES

Feb. 18, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency (US$)	Foreign currency (P)
United States	Dollar	0.926612	1.000000	54.100000
Japan	Yen	0.007703	0.008313	0.449700
United Kingdom	Pound	1.495923	1.614400	87.339000
Hongkong	Dollar	0.118810	0.128220	6.936700
Switzerland	Franc	0.680332	0.734214	39.721000
Canada	Dollar	0.608612	0.656814	35.533600
Singapore	Dollar	0.527954	0.569768	30.824400
Australia	Dollar	0.549104	0.592593	32.059300
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.457923	2.652590	143.505100
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.247103	0.266674	14.427100
Brunei	Dollar	0.526455	0.568150	30.736900
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000112	0.006100
Thailand	Baht	0.021499	0.023202	1.255200
UAE	Dirham	0.252304	0.272287	14.730700
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.079200	58.384700
ArgentinaPeso	0.291387	0.314465	17.012600	
Brazil	REAL	0.254075	0.274198	14.834100
Denmark	Kroner	0.134545	0.145201	7.855400
India	Rupee	0.019377	0.020912	1.131300
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.243878	0.263193	14.238700
Mexico	New Peso	0.085702	0.092490	5.003700
New Zealand	Dollar	0.511291	0.551785	29.851600
Norway	Kroner	0.132939	0.143468	7.761600
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016017	0.017286	0.935200
South Africa	Rand	0.111538	0.120372	6.512100
Korea	Won	0.000777	0.000838	0.045300
Sweden	Kroner	0.109877	0.118579	6.415100
Syria	Pound	0.022063	0.023810	1.288100
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026614	0.028722	1.553900
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000581	0.000627	0.033900

DISCLOSURES

THE LISTING yesterday of 334,666 common shares of **Cosmos Bottling Corp.** has brought the total number of common shares arising from the conversion of 287.2 million preferred Cosmos shares to 574.5 million.

* * *

NEXTSTAGE Inc. has postponed its annual stockholders' meeting originally scheduled on April 30, so that management can complete its annual report.

* * *

LEPANTO Consolidated Mining Co. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 21, 4 p.m., at the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel Inter-Continental Manila.

* * *

ROXAS Holdings Inc. has bought 210,000 of its own shares at 95 centavos each. Also, payment date for its 20-percent stock dividend declaration will be on March 26.

* * *

WATERFRONT Philippines Inc. has acquired over 74.8 million shares of **Acesite (Philippines) Hotel Corp.**, owners of Manila Pavilion Hotel. The shares represent a controlling interest in Acesite.

* * *

APC Group Inc. has announced the resignation of Washington Sycip as a director.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

Here comes the Sun

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

DIGITEL'S new cellular phone service is to be called Sun, after the brightest star in the firmament.

To be launched any day now with the usual Gokongwei tactic of price undercutting, Sun was chosen from among five names, according to the grapevine, after a market research conducted by Campaigns and Grey, the same ad agency that launched the price-busting Smart in the mid-'90s.

The new cellular service was originally scheduled for launching in the last quarter of 2002 but up until Monday, Sun was still awaiting an interconnection agreement with Smart and Globe for text messages, in addition to a voice interconnection link with Smart.

Expect another round of price war, this time with Smart joining Globe as targets.

Incidentally, Smart has farmed out its creative budget to include hotshot BBDO Guerrero Ortega, in addition to current FCB and DDB, but retained the media agency on record, meaning the agency that will farm out the ad placements among the mass media, to Ace/Saatchi & Saatchi.

Smart spends P450 million to P500 million a year for its advertising.

Stirring Pacific waters

AFTER the holiday calm, the waters of the First Pacific Group are astir again, with the rig-less banca of chair Manuel V. Pangilinan beginning to be buffeted by reawakened boardroom winds from the Hong Kong homebase.

A website article of the HK-based FinanceAsia magazine analyzing the Metro Pacific-Ayala/Campos deal—with MVP getting the blame for the costly Fort Bonifacio investment strategy—is being bounced off to Manila-based journalists.

According to the grapevine, the usual suspects from Hong Kong are it again, apparently in preparation for the March 12 board meeting of First Pacific.

If the above interpretation is correct, the inference is that the Salims are allowing their key lieutenants to resume knifing each other in public.

Landmark's missing link

GOOD news for Makati's mall rats and office workers.

Landmark and the Ayalas have finally come to terms about the opening of the Makati Avenue side of the department store and connecting it with the elevated pedestrian walkway.

The walkway is being aligned so it could meld with another elevated walkway leading to the new Greenbelt 3.

According to an Ayala Land spokesman, the Landmark passageway should be ready by May 1 and, a month later, the walkway should branch off and connect to the second floor of Park Square 2 car park as well.

The second level, Makati Avenue-side Landmark entrance should enable shoppers crossing from Greenbelt to avoid going down the escalator and U-turning by the smelly garbage exhaust outlets of Landmark's fast-food area to enter the department store.

These covered elevated links, plus the ongoing expansion of SM Shoemart, should also enable pedestrians to finally walk from the Edsa/Ayala MRT station all the way to RCBC's new headquarters at the corner of Buendia and Ayala, and vice versa, protected from the elements.

Gubernatorial list

REACTING to the Friday item here about a short list of potential central bank governors, Governor Rafael Buenaventura said he still has two years and four months in the Bangko Sentral and that any short list drawn now would be "premature."

"Besides it will be the incumbent president at that time that will appoint my replacement," the Gov said.

In any case, an administrative and even criminal infraction is no deterrent to appointment to high office, if we go by the two ex-bank presidents who both became finance secretaries despite having been fined and suspended by the Monetary Board.

Take a look at Congress.

Heard through the grapevine

ALARMED by the choking traffic gridlock in the Bacoor and Coastal Road area, Cavite officials led by Gov. Erineo Maliksi and Rep. Plaridel Abaya are meeting tomorrow with Teodoro Taguinod, chair of Public Estates Authority, to ask why the Coastal Road extension expressway project has also been held up at the PEA despite intervention from no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo herself.

Even with privatization, PEA apparently wants to retain the tollways collection and maintenance of the entire Coastal Road stretch, contrary to the conditions of project financiers led by the International Finance Corp.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Assemblers seek subsidy for vehicle exports

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT has to provide between $600 and $1,000 in subsidies for each vehicle sold to other countries to encourage more vehicle makers to invest in assembly plants in the country and sustain the export of automobiles in the long-term, according to Ford Motor Co. Philippines Inc.

Ford Philippines president Henry Co said that most vehicle exporting countries thrive on fiscal incentives that range from a low of $600 in subsidy per vehicle in Australia to a high of $2,000 per unit in South Africa.

Co cited the case of South Africa which already has a domestic market of 300,000 to 400,000 units per unit has provided financial incentives (such as rebates on taxes and duties) to its local assemblers to export overseas in the last four years. South Africa currently sells 100,000 units a year to Europe and Australia.

In contrast, the Philippines has the smallest market base among the Asean 4 countries (including Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia) with a little over 85,000 vehicles sold last year and the Department of Trade and Industry is having a hard time convincing the Department of Finance to support its export incentives package that would give tax credits to assemblers for every completely built up (CBU) that they export to other countries particularly in the Asean Free Trade Area.

Co said that the incentives were necessary for assemblers to disregard the country's small market, weak supply base and high infrastructure costs. Co said the size of the subsidy should be big enough to cover for the cost of bringing the unit to the target market and lower the cost of production. He said the export price should be as if they were produc-

ASSEMBLERS/ B6

BayanTel sees OK of debt deal

By Abigail L. Ho

LOPEZ-OWNED Bayan Telecommunications Inc. is confident that it would be able to come up with a substantial term sheet for the restructuring of its $477 million worth of debts by the middle of the year, with its secured creditors already agreeing to much of what the company had proposed.

In an interview yesterday, BayanTel chief finance officer Gary Olivar said that the "substantial agreement" with its secured creditors should give the company some momentum in dealing with its unsecured creditors.

Of the company's total debts, around 60 percent is secured while the remaining 40 percent is unsecured.

BayanTel was already able to bring both its secured and unsecured creditors in one place for further discussions, which Olivar pointed out was a good development.

In an earlier interview, he said the company had planned to bring together all its creditors in one place last December for thorough negotiations, but this was put off for January because of the Christmas holidays.

BayanTel's unaudited 2002 financial results showed that the company posted revenues of around P5 billion, almost the same as in 2001.

Its earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization was also stable at around P2.1 billion to P2.2 billion, he added.

Olivar, however, declined to reveal the company's net loss figure saying it was a "floating figure."

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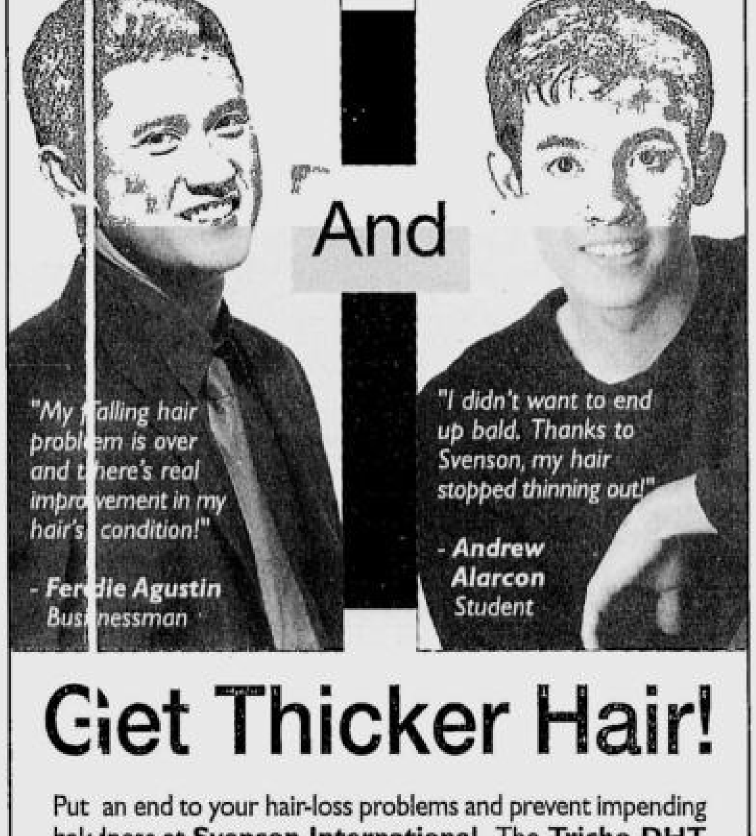
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INVITATION FOR BIDS

FOR SCRAP MANAGEMENT AND ASSET DISPOSAL SERVICES

Contract No. ADB/OAS-2003/014

1. The Asian Development Bank ("ADB"), a multilateral development finance institution headquartered in Manila, Philippines, invites interested companies to submit bids for the bidding for scrap management and asset disposal services at ADB Building, No. 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Philippines. The services involve handling of the documentation and sale of used ADB property, including, but not limited to IT equipment, printing machinery, materials handling equipment; motor vehicles, among others which become available from time to time at the best possible price be it public auction, on-line auction or sealed bid tender. The services also include managing ADB's shredding operations and removal of shredded paper, old newspapers, etc., from the ADB premises. The scope of services is provided in detail in the Work Performance Statement given to interested applicants.
2. The bidding is open to firms or joint ventures from eligible member countries of ADB. Such a company has an extensive experience and developed market tools to remove items scheduled for disposal within shortest possible time thus eliminating storage problem, dispose them through methods that are most beneficial to ADB, complying with host country regulations relating to applicable taxes and duties of the host country and remit money to ADB. A commission paid by ADB to the qualified company should not exceed current cost of the disposing. Moreover, it is expected that special expertise of the qualified company should provide ADB with higher income generated from disposal.
3. The contract shall be for one (1) year and thereafter ADB has the option to renew the contract every year for a maximum of five years.
4. Eligible applicants may obtain the bid documents by calling or faxing the Head, Contracts Section, General Services Division, Office of Administrative Services, Asian Development Bank, No. 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Philippines at Tel. Nos. 632-5641/632-4231, Fax No. 636-2567 and e-mail addresses: adjusupbekova@adb.org or dmunoz@adb.org from **21, 24-25 February 2003 (8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)** The documents are available for a non-refundable fee of Pesos Three Hundred (P300.00).
5. Bidders will be required to submit two copies (marked "Original" and "Copy") of their bid documents each in a sealed envelope, which must be delivered either by hand or by registered mail addressed to the attention of "Head, Contracts Section, General Services Division, Office of Administrative Services, Asian Development Bank, 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Philippines", not later than 5:00 p.m. on **13 March 2003**, and be clearly marked "Invitation For Bids for Scrap Management and Asset Disposal Services, Contract No. ADB/OAS-2003/014".
6. This invitation does not entail any commitment on the part of ADB, either financial or otherwise. Any cost of preparation for bid documents shall be borne solely by the applicant. ADB reserves the right to accept or reject any bid.

(Sgd.) NORMIN S. PAKPAHAN
Director
General Services Division
Office of Administrative Services

(PDI – Feb. 19 & 20, 2003)

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ANGIE A. PATIAG who died on Jan. 5, 2003 has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs per Doc 54, Page 98, Book XI, Series of 2003 dated Feb. 03, 2003 of Notary Public Jose Ronald V. Valles of Pasig City.
(PDI-Feb. 5, 12, & 19 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Province of Misamis Oriental
Cagayan de Oro City

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R.A. Act. No. 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that NENITA A. BOOC has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from THELMA to NENITA in the birth certificate of THELMA RICO AMBOY who was born on March 14, 1955 at MANILA and whose parents are JUAN AMBOY and ESTRELLITA RICO.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his written opposition within this office not later than 21 February 2003.

(Sgd.) LEO G. WA BE
City/Municipal Civil Registrar

(PDI--Feb. 12 & 19, 2003)

ERRATUM

The ad of **TAT LAKEHILL GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB, INC.** re: Notice which was published last February 17, 2003 has the following corrections:

A) Instead of 1,200 Class "C" shares, as printed, it should be read as 1,200 Class "D" shares for registration.
B) Atty. Francisco Ancheta's name should be deleted from the list of incorporators/ directors.

TAT LAKEHILL GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB, INC.

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

The estate of the late **ANASTACIO C. CACAYORIN** was extrajudicially partitioned with waiver on January 24, 2003 by his heirs Fidela, Edwin Sr., Jean and Wilson, acknowledged before Notary Public Thomas T. Que, Jr. as Doc. No. 639, Page No. 28, Book No. II, Series of 2003.
(PDI-Feb. 5. 12 & 19. 2003)

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PEOPLE at WORK

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ● Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

BREAKFAST CHAT

'Mr. Job Market' shares sure way to get a job

JOBSEEKERS nowadays, like survivors floating at sea, are likely to chant: "Jobs, jobs everywhere but no position for me!" There are many advertisements for job vacancies, like those in INQUIRER's Job Market section that comes out every Sunday, but job seekers need to find a sure way to land their dream jobs.

To give jobseekers advice on this score, TV show host Ria Tanjuatco and McGraw Hill marketing executive Jenny Javier interviewed Donald Lim, assistant vice president for Marketing Services and Classified Ads of Philippine Daily Inquirer, in yesterday's People at Work segment in Studio 23's Breakfast. Lim gave insights on how jobseekers can land their dream jobs.

At 26, Lim is the youngest executive in the INQUIRER management team and handles the Job Market section of the paper, which publishes job opportunities. In this area of responsibility, he has swiftly introduced innovations that have attracted additional readers and advertisers to the section, earning for him the nickname "Mr. Job Market." One of these innovations was the launching of Job Market nationwide last Feb. 2. Prior to working with INQUIRER, Lim already had four years managerial experience in his track record. The youngest MBA student in his class and one of the top five in his batch, he earned his MBA degree from Murdoch University of Perth, West Australia.

Here's the gist of the interview:

PaW: You started out well early in your career and have been successful ever since. How did you get started?

Lim: After graduating from Ateneo de Manila University in 1998, I started looking for a job. During that time, we were deep into the economic crisis. But I just kept on looking, being very persistent. When I graduated, I printed a hundred copies of my resume and I sent these to a hundred companies. Around 20 responded, then, I got around 10 interviews. Finally, it narrowed down to three. Of the three, I landed my first job with Burger King. I handled the restaurant and then later on, the marketing department.

PaW: So, based on your experience, one shouldn't say, "Okay, there are five companies in the Philippines that I want to work for so I am just going to print five resumes." You are advising job seekers to send out a lot of resumes?

Lim: Yes. Though I graduated at the top of my marketing class, I didn't have any assurance that I would get a job. I think what's important is the individual.

PaW: Since you handle the job ads in PDI, what can you tell jobseekers now? There are a lot of graduates saying: "There's nothing out there for me, these are hard times..."

Lim: Surprisingly, last January and February, the job market went up. If you look at the broadsheets, you can see there are a lot of recruitment ads right now. Usually after the December holidays, you would see a downtrend in job ads in January and February. But that's not the case this year. So, I think a lot of businesses and industries are very optimistic. Even with the impending war, I think a lot are optimistic and are likely to push for more business.

PaW: What tips can you give job hunters to make their search easier and faster at this time?

Lim: They have to be very persistent. If you just give out five resumes when you graduate, don't expect all the five companies to get back to you—that's impossible. You really have to work in sending out resumes. Remember the 80-20 percent rule. If you send out a hundred resumes, expect around 20 percent to get back to you. If you just send out five, maybe just one will get back to you. Your success will also depend on your interview and exams. So persistency pays off. When you go out to look for the right job, don't be ashamed of knocking on HR people's doors saying, "Can I have a job?" or something like that.

PaW: How has INQUIRER made it easier for people looking for jobs?

Lim: In the new Job Market, which we are formally introducing to our advertisers on Thursday, we have a special section called Sunday People at Work. It has tips on how to write resumes, how to pass interviews and other techniques in job hunting. We also feature HR people to familiarize our readers on what to expect from the HR department, which normally does the hiring for a company. Readers of Job Market don't just find recruitment openings; they also get tips on how to get into those jobs.

PaW: So that's every Sunday in INQUIRERr. When did you launch this new look for the Job Market?

Lim: We started Sunday People at Work in October of last year. And then, on the first Sunday of February, we went nationwide. Right now, Job Market is also read in Visayas and Mindanao. Previously, we were just in Metro Manila. So companies advertising in the Job Market can expect more applicants.

LIM

(Email your suggestions and inquiries to optima@edsamail.com.ph.*)*

Working moms live in a kaleidoscope of life

WORKING MOM

An Mercado Alcantara

LIKE most working moms, I'm guilty of living my life in disjointed parts. I am never completely present where I am. I may be wading deep into a board meeting, but my mind is curled up at home with my baby. I may be on all fours on the floor chasing after a toddler, but my thoughts are on that report waiting at my desk. As I list my office-to-do list, my grocery list runs on a parallel track, my daughter's homework chugs on another, and the outline for an article is on auto-pilot. Doing a little bit here, a little bit there, I am often haunted by the thought that I am not living my best life yet.

Bigger whole

A working mom's life is a kaleidoscope: our days form little bits of color here and there, taken by themselves they don't mean much; but put into focus, they do manage to form a pretty whole. What is the tube of mirrors that will make sense of our days? Ah, discovering that is part of the working mom's adventure. And it is in your own hands. You can choose to look at your life as a frenzied jumble of unrelated events or a series of stepping stones toward a bigger whole.

In this month's issue of Metro Working Mom (with Sharon Cuneta on the cover), we help you rediscover just what it is that drives you to do all that you do. In an article written by Dedet Reyes-Panabi, we give exercises on how to look at the myriad pieces of your life. Try some of the exercises, it may help you regain your focus and see our life as a meaningful whole again:

Heart's desire

- Draw an image of how you would like to perceive yourself, a projection of the person you want to become. Let your drawing speak, introducing itself in the first person. Let it tell about itself and then write down what' it says.
- Ask yourself, "What is my Heart's Desire? What is the one thing I want to do, to be or to express that is currently being blocked?" Select or create two characters: One is your Heart's Desire and the other is your block. Begin a written dialogue by letting your non-dominant hand express your Heart's Desire. Be as elaborate and detailed as you want. Then let your Inner Critic speak. Let your objections and your fears flow; once you know what is holding you back, you will be able to find ways to overcome that negative voice.

Goals

- Imagine the eulogy at your funeral. What do you want to be remembered for? Write down that speech—within those words are your mission in life.
- Who do you envy? Identify a person who you are jealous of, and try to pinpoint exactly what she has that you believe is missing in your own life. Now quietly let go of the anger and thank that person for being a teacher in your quest for joy. Remember that envy is your own soul's way of reminding you what you want—now promise yourself to stop wasting your energies on hatred, and redirecting them to building the life you want.

One step at a time

What can I do today?

It can be overwhelming to look at the future and realize how far we have to go. The trick is to take the journey one step at a time—and attract as much encouragement and support as you can.

- Start each day with a simple goal. So maybe your dream is to write a book. Before you panic at the sight of an empty computer screen, tell yourself that you're just going to make a character sketch. Or turn off the computer, take out the less intimidating pile of scratch paper, and assure yourself that you're just going to make an outline of the first chapter. That way, you always get something done, and you'll be typing "The End" before you even realize it.

Dream ladder

- Make a Dream Ladder. At the end of each day, write down something—no matter how small-that contributed towards reaching your goal. For example, if one of your dreams is to lead a healthier, more active life, jot a few sentences down about how you rejected a greasy hamburger for a tossed green salad.
- Put together a dream scrapbook. Write down your hopes, your fears, and the steps you are taking towards the life you want. You can cut out magazine pictures that symbolize your heart's desires, inspiring poems and stories, and loving notes from friends and family.
- Choose a Future Familiar. Familiars are animal companions of wizards and other magical beings. They are said to symbolize, protect, and even enhance one's powers. In this spirit, choose a Familiar who best captures your personality and goals, print out a picture, and tape it on your cubicle. This is a private, but still effective, way of reminding you of your personal mission in the office.

(An Mercado Alcantara is editor-in-chief of Metro Working Mom published by ABS-CBN Publishing. For more tips, get a copy of this months issue with Sharon Cuneta on the cover. You may reach her at rmwm_abscbn@skyinet.net.*)*

Gov't employee wants to get out of wrong job

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice

FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

SHOULD I resign or not? This question has been lingering in my thoughts since I got hired by one of the government agencies a year ago. I realize that this is my first job but I really find it very degrading to be given a clerical position in view of my educational attainment. Modesty aside, I graduated from one of the top universities in the Philippines. If I only had the money that time to spend for job applications, I would not have accepted the job. The only thing I appreciated was, I was not asked to work as a clerk but as a writer. But, I don't think I am properly compensated. I think I was not given the right position.

My salary would really not matter if I do not have a family to support. I sometimes burst into tears because of the unfair process of promotion in this agency. I am starting to get demoralized. The additional benefits and the fear of not getting a better job prevent me from pursuing my resignation. Please help me weigh things out. What should I do?

Frustrated
Government Employee

Thank you for your letter. I can empathize with your situation. In response to your dilemma, I would like to share two perspectives.

First of all, I view that all work is noble, even clerical work. In our country, we have the tendency to look down on certain jobs. In fact, the way we view work may in fact be a drawback in finding and creating jobs. But in truth, what is important is not the type of work but work that matches our capabilities and makes us feel good about ourselves. We should seek work that fulfills us, that enables us to meet our full potential, and that responds to our economic needs.

Second, what is beautiful about the human person is the gift of free will. He can exercise the power of choice. So exercise this power but not in a reckless manner. Considering you have a family to support, I propose you use your vacation leave to explore options. Have a firm job offer before you submit your resignation.

Self-assessment

Do a personal SWOT. Study your own personal strengths and weaknesses and explore your immediate and broader environment in terms of opportunities and threats. This will allow you to make a realistic assessment of what is available in the job market that matches your strengths and minimizes your weaknesses. From your letter, I can see you have good written communication skills. These skills are a competitive edge when applying for work.

Set criteria for your next career move. What kind of industry attracts you? What kind of work environment is likely to bring out the best in you? What is your personality and what kind of work interests you? The easiest transition is to use your current skills set but in a different industry.

Prospecting

Make a list of prospects. The most promising is to ask your relatives and friends if they know of job openings in their respective companies. Then, buy a Sunday edition of the Inquirer and review the Job Market section for jobs that interest you. You can also try the web sites that advertise available jobs.

Prepare an attractive resume that focuses on your accomplishments in your current work. I suggest you prepare two types. One resume can focus " laser like" on a particular job that you desire. This is the customized resume. For example, you want to get into a particular company or agency because of their outstanding record as "employer of choice." Your goal is to get in and you are willing to be flexible on your entry position. In this case, prepare a longer resume, building on the theme of totality and variety of your skills set. Make sure that the company believes in meritocracy and career management. This will ensure that you don't get stuck in the entry position.

Rehearsal

Rehearse for the interview. Today, interviewers prepare for interviews using as framework a set of competencies or dimensions that will ensure success in a given position. Their questions, often open ended in format, are designed to bring out either positive or critical incidents. These incidents will demonstrate or illustrate the required competencies or dimensions. It would be great if you could role-play a job interview with someone who can then give you feedback and points for improvement.

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

If you pursue my suggestions, you will discover that there are enterprises willing to welcome and grow fresh talent. Wishing you all the best in your search for a truly meaningful next job.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting Send comments, feedback oı requests for advice through c-mail to ancillaedc@ pacific.net.ph *or fax to 892-2902.)*

TERMINATION RATE ROW

Local carriers adopt firm stand vs US counterparts

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER taking a united stand to raise termination rates to $0.12 a minute, local carriers have again took a solid stance not to bow to pressure from United States carriers despite the charges filed against them with the US Federal Communications Commission.

An executive of dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. yesterday said that PLDT was not the only company that would be standing up to major US carriers AT&T Corp. and Worldcom Inc.

The source disclosed that most of the local carriers had hired telecommunications lawyers in the US to represent them before the US FCC.

"We see no strong legal basis to the complaint of AT&T and MCI Worldcom against the local telcos (telephone companies). This is all bullying tactics and harassment, and we will not allow it. We see no reason why we should bow to the pressure of AT&T and MCI Worldcom and bring our rates down," the PLDT official said.

He added that local carriers could have increased their termination rates to as high as $0.23 a minute and it would still have been within the target settlement rates set by the International Telecommunications Union.

According to the ITU, countries with a teledensity of one to five telephones for every 100 people could charge a termination rate of $0.23 a minute.

Despite this rate ceiling, the PLDT source pointed out that local carriers chose to raise termination rates to only $0.12 a minute starting Feb. 1 from the previous $0.08 a minute as they deemed this rate quite fair and reasonable.

"This is obviously a reasonable and fair rate increase. But more importantly, we have to stand by our partners represented by over 100 of the biggest telcos in the world who have agreed to the rates," the source said.

Meanwhile, Lopez-owned Bayan Telecommunications Inc. said it would have been more appropriate for AT&T and Worldcom to file their cases with the National Telecommunications Commission as this was the regulatory body that covered the local carriers and not the US FCC.

BayanTel chief consultant Tunde Fafunwa said in an interview yesterday that the NTC would have more jurisdiction on the cases as they concerned Philippine carriers.

He added that AT&T and Worldcom could have both just chosen to settle with local carriers instead of taking their cases to the US regulatory body.

Also, BayanTel chief technology officer and chief information officer Toby Ayer said the Lopez-owned firm would have welcomed a settlement of its dispute with AT&T and Worldcom through negotiations instead of with a third party mediating.

Sony of Japan ties up with Photokina

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

CONSUMER electronics giant Sony Corp. of Japan has tied up with Photokina Marketing Corp. to penetrate the Philippine photo industry and sell more digital still and video cameras.

Sony Philippines director for national sales and marketing division Paul Shioda said Sony chose Photokina because of its extensive network of 130 photo shops nationwide.

The company expects to sustain its 10-percent sales growth in the Philippines this fiscal year on the back of higher demand for digital audio-video products as more Filipinos snap up cool gadgets despite their high price tag.

Shioda said that while Sony had slashed the prices of its in-house television and hi-fi equipment to maintain its market share from prying rivals, it had stepped up the promotion of digital music players and video and still cameras to feed on the tech-crazed Filipinos hankering for the latest gizmos.

Sony kicked off its Digital Wonders promotion in the country by launching the world's smallest digital camcorders; an affordable digital still camera (Cybershot U); and high-speed net mini disk walkman recorders. These products provide mobility and connectivity to computers.

Sony Philippines assistant manager for sales and marketing Tess D. Baluyot said Sony's digital audio-video had been the main engine for growth in the Philippines. Sales of Sony's digital audio video line has been growing by twin-digits since 1999 positing a 24-percent rise in fiscal year ending March 2002. Baluyot expected the digital audio video line to grow by 30 percent this fiscal year.

She said the growing popularity of cool gadgets especially among young consumers has prompted the company to update its product line more regularly. The camcorders and mini-disk walkman were introduced here only recently.

Sony Japan acquired 70 percent of Sony Philippines in 1997.

BSP acts to ease impact of war on OFWs

From page B1

In the meantime, Golez said the Philippines might also enter into a special arrangement with foreign correspondent banks to assist overseas workers in their remittances.

He admitted that foreign banks might be harder to court now after the Philippines failed to meet the global anti-money laundering standards.

In a related development, the BSP had presented various economic scenarios in the light of of the rising crude oil prices in the world market, which was brought about by the Middle East tension.

BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the inflation rate would likely stay within the target of 4.5 to 5.5 percent this year for as long as crude oil would not exceed $46 per barrel.

Tetangco said a 36 to 66-percent increase in crude prices to more than $25 per barrel would be manageable and would keep inflation rate within target. A price increase of more than 66 percent ,however, will already impact on the country's inflation rate.

"If crude oil prices go up by 66 percent and this situation persists for a year, we would see inflation hitting the higher end of the target. Anything above a 66-percent increase for a long period would push inflation beyond the target," said the BSP deputy governor.

So far, crude prices have increased by 48 percent to $37 per barrel.

The increase in crude oil prices was partly responsible for the weak peso as it pushed importers, particularly in the oil sector, to build up their inventory through importation. As importers scramble for dollars, they create a dollar shortfall in the spot market.

Dispersal of economic growth

MINDANAO ONE

Joji Ilagan-Bian

THE FIRST few days of the love month saw me traveling again, in and around Mindanao, reaching out to my peers in the business community.

Cagayan: Home to major agricultural enterprises. A productive area which boasts of a strong agricultural sector, a confident business community, a growing agri-industrial base, and a burgeoning services sector, Cagayan de Oro beckons with unlimited business opportunities.

This day saw me attending the first steering committee meeting for the 12th Mindanao Business Conference or MinBizCon, which is slated for September in this city. The MinBizCon is organized annually by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Mindanao Business Council.

The steering committee meeting was a venue for the signing of a memorandum of agreement between the MBC and the Cagayan de Oro Chamber of Commerce, host chamber for this year's MinBizCon. Also present at the signing were the Department of Trade and Industry Region X and the USAID-funded Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) Program. The 12th MinBizCon will highlight Mindanao's concern for the dispersal of economic growth and development, and stress the critical role of small and medium enterprises (SME's) in countryside development. It will focus on Northern Mindanao as one of Mindanao's economic growth clusters and will put emphasis on Cagayan de Oro City's role and position in the Mindanao business community.

Iligan City: The agri-industrial center of Mindanao's Greater Northern Corridor. Home to the Metro Iligan Regional Agri-Industrial Center (MIRAIC), a one-stop complex for the production of quality locally made machine parts for agriculture, food processing and other industries, this city also boasts of the world-renowned Maria Christina Falls.

It was a cloudy Friday morning when I joined Mayor Franklin Quijano and the Iligan Chamber of Commerce in a Workshop on Private Sector Participation in City Economic Development. In attendance were regional bankers and businessmen, all member chambers, and some Iligan residents. I reiterated the MBC's stand to pursue and address issues and concerns in relation to the attainment of good and responsive governance, strong government and business sector relationship, investor-friendly initiatives, better infrastructure that would help enhance trade and business, and human resource development in Mindanao.

General Santos City: Tuna capital of the Philippines. Richly endowed with fertile soil, lush fishing grounds and valuable mineral resources, GenSan is the country's largest producer of tuna and asparagus and is number two in livestock production. With its rich marine life and recently modernized port and fish handling facilities, it is the leading fish center in the region.

As early as 1998, the MBC was already lobbying for the development of multi-modal transport infrastructure (land, sea and air) in Mindanao to rationalize institutions and transport policies in the island. These, in turn, would facilitate the flow of goods within and outside our islands, resulting in lower transaction costs. It was through this initiative that the Corn Logistics Competitive Program was established.

I was so fortunate to be present at the discussion here among representatives of the integrators, farmers, cooperatives, and some lending investors. The integration of some of the areas of the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani (GMA) Corn Program of the Department of Agriculture was the subject of the forum. The DA and all the sectors involved gave updates on their accomplishments and threshed out several issues and concerns. Everyone had a common agenda: to reprogram the present set-up in the production and post-production of corn and eventually see big improvements through the Mindanao Grains Highway program of the government.

* * *

The Department of Trade and Industry, through the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (Citem), is organizing the "Philippines-China: Ties that Bind" A Philippine Solo Exhibition, on March 27-30, 2003 at the Shanghai Exhibition Center, Shanghai, China. A Reconnaissance Mission is also being organized for those who are looking into China as a possible destination for market expansion. In this regard, we are inviting delegates, food entrepreneurs to this China Trade Mission which will cover the major provinces and cities in China, particularly Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong.

* * *

The first ever Mindanao Competitiveness Forum and SME (Small & Medium Enterprise) Financing Fair will be held on March 24-25 at the Marco Polo Hotel, Davao City.

The MBC is gathering public and private institutional fund providers, SME's, and management specialists to commit themselves to sustain the vision of a broader and more equitable distribution of economic benefits in Mindanao over the long term. The forum was designed for manufacturers, local investors and export traders in Mindanao who need to approach banks and other financial institutions for credit and financing services.

Interested participants to the Forum and the China Trade Mission may contact The Mindanao Business Council for reservations at Tel. No. (082) 224-2581 or e-mail mbcphil@mozcom.com/mbcphil@yahoo.com).

(Ms. Joji Ilagan-Bian is the chairperson of the Mindanao Business Council and vice president of the East Asian Business Council).

Assemblers seek subsidy . . .

From page B3

ing the unit in the target market.

Since the Philippines would be targeting the Asean markets, Co said the subsidy should hew closer to Australia's level. "It all depends on the proximity of the target market and the government's financial condition. But with the ballooning budget deficit, I don't think the government can afford to give too much to export subsidies," Co said.

Ford, the country's No. 6 automobile firm, is so far the only local assembler that is exporting CBUs in significant numbers (14,000 units of Ford Escape and Lynx are set to be shipped out to Thailand and Indonesia this year). Co said that he did not think that a long-term export program could be sustained if no incentives were granted to fuel the market expansion.

PNOC-EDC clears initial public offering

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PNOC Energy Development Corp. has passed a resolution clearing its initial public offering.

In an interview yesterday, PNOC-EDC chair Sergio Apostol disclosed that the company would offer 10 percent of its shares to small investors as required by law.

Apostol said there was no deadline set, and PNOC-EDC had yet to name a financial adviser.

"We have not threshed out the details, which we may tackle in a special board meeting (today)," he said.

He said the company's assets were valued at around P103 billion.

PNOC-EDC has eight power plants in Tongonan, Leyte.

It also has two power plants at the Mt. Apo National Park in North Cotabato. These facilities are covered by build-operate-transfer contracts with Oxbow Power Corp. and Marubeni Corp.

As of 2001, PNOC-EDC has paid a total of P8.7 billion in taxes and fees to the national government since it was formed in 1976.

These include P1.3 billion in royalties to the Department of Energy and local government units that host PNOC-EDC's projects.

PNOC-EDC also has steamfield and power plant concerns in Negros, Albay and Sorsogon apart from those in Leyte and North Cotabato.

It is also operating, along with the National Power Corp., two power plants in Palinpinon, Negros and two others in the Bacon-Manito field that straddles the provinces of Albay and Sorsogon.

PNOC-EDC hopes to add four more steamfields that it is exploring in Negros, Mindoro, Leyte and Sorsogon.

It expects these steamfields to support power plants with a total generating capacity of 200 megawatts.

MITSUBISHI MOTORS PHILIPPINES CORPORATION

IMF sees no world recession from Iraq war

FRANKFURT—International Monetary Fund head Horst Koehler said in an interview with a German newspaper released on Saturday that he did not believe the world economy will fall into recession as a result of a war in Iraq.

Koehler told the Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung in an interview released ahead of publication that international financial markets have developed a higher degree of resistance in recent years to such shocks.

"A lot depends on how long a possible war will last and on which regions will be involved. With caution, I think that it will not come to a world recession," Koehler added.

He said many countries had learnt lessons from the financial crises of the late 1990s, with many now having flexible exchange rates and higher currency reserves.

Financial markets may also gain if any war in Iraq came to a swift conclusion.

"This (a short war) can lead to a positive surprise for overall growth but the danger of terrorism will remain," Koehler said.

He added that he would caution against over optimistic expectations of economic recovery in the case of a short war but expected global growth in 2003 to exceed that of last year.

"For the global economy, I expect a realistic growth rate of around 3 percent, above that of 2002." Koehler said he expected the US economy to remain sluggish for some time.

"This year the growth engine of America will continue to sputter for some months."

Meanwhile, relief that the prospects of imminent war in Iraq appeared to be receding, kicked stocks higher on Monday, lifted the dollar and drained investor interest in gold.

Analysts, however, warned that the easing of concern could be short-lived, while European Central Bank Governor Wim Duisenberg underlined the uncertainty with which financial markets and economic policy makers have been living.

"Nobody knows, if the uncertainties become reality, whether it will take three days or three months or even longer for the situation to work itself out," he said. *Reuters*

最後狂減徹底清貨
FINAL SALE
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9

A SHOP advertises its closing down sale in Hong Kong's central business district. As unemployment hits record highs and property prices at an all-time low, retail outlets find it more difficult to stay afloat with many small businesses closing down with no improvement in the economy in sight. AFP

Speculation rises on Greenspan's future

WASHINGTON—His pointed criticism of the Bush tax plan showed that Alan Greenspan, often taken to task for being too murky in his economic pronouncements, can be crystal clear when he wants to be.

GREENSPAN AFP

The Federal Reserve chairman warned that further tax cuts should be paid for, leading Democrats to proclaim that Greenspan had delivered the "kiss of death" for President Bush's $1.3-trillion proposal.

GOP lawmakers fumed. Greenspan, himself a Republican, had stabbed them in the back, they said.

The White House went into damage-control mode, pointing out that Greenspan had endorsed the plan's centerpiece, elimination of the tax on stock dividends.

Private economists saw the episode last week as remarkable given Greenspan's deft touch, after more than 15 years on the job, in avoiding political mine fields. They wondered if Greenspan's blunt words were a sign of a man no longer worried about his future.

Presidential aides quickly dismissed speculation that Greenspan's comments indicated a serious rift between the Fed and Bush, or that the administration had decided on Greenspan's successor.

"His term is not even expired until the middle of next year, so it's sort of silly to begin speculating about that," White House spokesperson Claire Buchan said.

Greenspan's latest comments certainly differed from his remarks about Bush's first tax cut, a $1.35-trillion, 10-year reduction that Congress passed in 2001.

Greenspan came out in favor of a big tax cut that year and gave a major push to the new president. Greenspan reasoned that the 10-year projected surplus of $5.6 trillion gave Congress plenty of room to cut taxes and still accomplish his preferred goal: to reduce the national debt.

The surplus turned out to be illusory, however, eaten up by a recession, the fight against terrorism and the tax cut.

What was surprising about Greenspan's congressional testimony last week was not so much the warnings against further tax cuts, now that budget deficits have returned, but rather the extent of his criticism of the Bush program.

Greenspan said future tax cuts should be paid for, either by spending cuts or tax increases. Bush does not propose that. The Fed chairman also raised doubts about one of Bush's biggest selling points—that the economy needs another round of government stimulus.

Greenspan contended that once the uncertainty over war in Iraq passes, economic growth should accelerate without the need for additional tax cuts.

For good measure, he directly challenged the administration's "deficits don't matter" school of thought and the contention that economic growth alone can take care of the revenue lost from the tax cuts.

Some saw Greenspan's widespread critique as an effort to restore the credibility he lost on the deficit issue when he endorsed the 2001 tax cut. *AP*

US must enhance cooperation with SE Asia, business group says

SINGAPORE—The United States should enhance political, economic and security cooperation with Southeast Asia as the region's importance has significantly risen after the terrorist attacks of September 2001, according to an influential business group.

"There are opportunities for decisive action that can be taken this year to send strong signals of confidence to investors, and boost trade and investment opportunities for companies and workers in both the US and Asean," said Ernest Bower, president of the US-Asean Business Council.

A visit by US President George W. Bush to the region to attend the annual Asia-Pacific leaders' summit in Bangkok this October would be one measure which could signal Washington's commitment, he said.

The council, which groups top US firms doing business in the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), has submitted its recommendations to the US government and Congress, according to a report obtained here Tuesday.

"Over the past two years, the US government has significantly increased its engagement of Asean and its member nations in Southeast Asia.

In addition to Bush's trip, the US Congress should approve the US-Singapore Free Trade Agreement "at the earliest possible time" and the US Trade Representative should kickstart talks for a similar deal with Thailand.

The council said approval of the US-Singapore FTA on a bipartisan basis would "signal that the US wants liberalized trade regimes in Asia." Singapore and the US recently wrapped up negotiations on the FTA.

Washington should also complete a trade facilitation agreement with Malaysia, establish normal trading relations with Laos and help prepare Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam for entry into the World Trade Organization, the report added. *AFP*

Bank says Japan economy still weak

TOKYO—Japan's central bank kept its bleak view of the economy unchanged for the fourth straight month in a report Monday that said growth was hampered by weak domestic consumption and wobbly exports.

Anemic recovery in the US and European economies, plagued by tensions in the Middle East, limited Japan's hopes for an export-led recovery, the Bank of Japan said in its monthly report.

According to the report, "Economic activity remains flat amid substantial uncertainty about the outlook for the economy."

One bright spot was employment, with the number of new job offers showing a rising trend, the report said.

But that was outweighed by an ongoing decline in wages, which was eroding consumer confidence and preventing an upswing in private consumption.

Public spending continued to decline and business investment was lackluster due to the uncertainty in overseas economies.

The central bank kept its monetary policy unchanged Friday, but said it was prepared to provide extra cash to maintain stability in the financial markets.

Japan has been battling a slowdown for more than a decade, and in Monday's report, the bank noted with concern the weakness of Japanese stock prices. Tokyo stocks have been hovering around 19-year lows.

Japanese stocks fell yesterday as major exporters including Toyota and Sony were hurt by the sharp rise in the yen, and banks sold shareholdings to raise funds ahead of the March fiscal year-end, dealers said.

The Tokyo Stock Exchange's Nikkei-225 average dropped 0.90 percent or 78.92 points to end at 8,692.97, while the Topix index of all first section issues inched down 0.58 points to 856.70.

"The dollar fell just over a yen through the day so Sony is down, Toyota is down and the tech stocks are down," said Garry Evans, strategist at HSBC Securities.

Uncertainties over the impact on overseas economies of a possible US war against Iraq also continued to plague the market.

"The situation in Iraq is a question on everyone's mind," said Evans.

Trading volume was estimated at a heavy 1.013 billion shares.

Advances outnumbered declines 739 to 606, with 150 stocks unchanged. *AFP*

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China economy still growing

BEIJING—China issued another signal on Tuesday that its economy is still growing powerfully, announcing industrial production rose a robust 14.8 percent in January, propelled by soaring output of cars, computers and mobile phones.

Analysts said the figures released by the State Statistical Bureau showed economic expansion was still on track despite some fears the country's first monthly trade deficit in six years in January could weigh on growth.

"Generally speaking, there are indications that economic activities are continuing the trend from the third and fourth quarter of last year," said Song Guoqing, chief economist at the China Stock Exchange Executive Council.

Factory output jumped 14.9 percent in December, the fastest pace since the 1997-98 Asian economic crisis, due to strong export growth and sustained state spending on infrastructure.

That helped annual industrial output grow 12.6 percent in 2002, when the economy grew a robust 8 percent.

The government has yet to announce a growth target for full-year industrial output, but some officials have predicted it could grow 10 percent in 2003.

Song said he expected industrial output to grow between 11 and 12 percent this year.

In January, car production rocketed 120 percent year on year to 127,000, while output of all types of vehicles rose 55.5 percent to 325,000, the bureau said.

China's auto market is the fastest-growing in the world, with annual sales of passenger cars growing 56 percent last year to top the one-million mark for the first time.

Despite rising competition, foreign carmakers are pouring billions of dollars into the country to tap growing Chinese wealth fueled by years of rapid economic growth.

The bureau also said output of computers, mobile phones and integrated circuits grew between 27.1 percent and 80.2 percent in January. *Reuters*

VACANT POSITIONS FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with CSC MC #27 s. 1991, the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB), Kalayaan Avenue corner Mayaman St., Diliman, Quezon City, hereby publishes the following vacant positions:

1 NURSE I SG-10; Bachelor of Science in Nursing; preferably with 1 year relevant experience; Eligibility – RA 1080 (Nursing Board)

1 HHRO IV SG-19; Bachelor's degree; 2 years of relevant experience; 8 hours of relevant training; Eligibility – CS Prof.

2 HHRO III SG-16; Bachelor's degree; 1 year of relevant experience; 4 hours of relevant training; Eligibility – CS Prof.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED RURAL BANK OF ECHAGUE (ISABELA), INC.

1. Starting February 20, 2003, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) thru its duly authorized representatives shall receive claims for insured deposits maintained with the closed Rural Bank of Echague (Isabela), Inc.
2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the premises of the said closed bank from February 20 to February 27, 2003, Monday thru Fridays, during office hours, where PDIC representatives are stationed to accept claims and entertain queries of depositors.

   After the said dates, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC office from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or by mail addressed to –

   The Manager
   Claims Processing Department
   Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
   2228 Chino Roces Avenue, 1231 Makati City
3. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to our representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook and/or Certificate of Time Deposit; and
   b. Latest identification document (ID) bearing the depositor's signature

   Other documents may be required by our representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.
4. Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 3591, as amended, the prescriptive date (last day) for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Rural Bank of Echague (Isabela), Inc. is on **July 27, 2004.** After **July 27, 2004,** PDIC as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

(PDI - Feb. 19 & 20, 2003)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
Poblacion, Mc Arthur Highway, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan
Tel. Nos. (075) 5687388 and (075) 568-7292

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed proposals together with 10% bid bond for the purchase on CASH BASIS of the Bank properties listed below will be received at the LBP-Urdaneta Lending Center not later than March 12, 2003 at 2:00 PM at which place, date and time, said proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
1.	TCT #s 59212, 59214, 59216 – three (3) parcels of contiguous Agricultural lands in Gueset, San Manuel, Pangasinan. Area – 32,537 sq.ms.	P 650,700.00
2.	TCT #s 59215 – A parcel of agri-land three in Gueset Sur, San Manuel, Pangasinan with an area of 7,554 sq.ms.	151,100.00
3.	TCT # 59213 – A parcel of residential land in Poblacion, San Manuel, Pangasinan with an area of 1,309 sq.ms.	458,200.00
4.	TCT # 46601 – A parcel of residential land in Brgy. San Antonio, Rosales, Pangasinan w/ an area of 420 sq.ms.	84,000.00
5.	TCT #s 256650 & 256649 – Two parcels of industrial land in Bo. Mabilao, San Fabian, Pangasinan w/ poultry hatchery buildings and equipment.	7,717,237.50
6.	TCT # 30378 – A parcel of resd'l. land located in San Marcelino, Balungao, Pangasinan w/ area of 1,000 sq.ms.	60,000.00
7.	TCT # 261308 – A parcel of agr'l/comm'l land with piggery buildings in Brgy. Amacalan, Malasiqui, Pangasinan with area of 5,001 sq.ms.	1,306,000.00
8.	TCT # 261309 – A parcel of agr'l/comm'l land with improvements in Bo. Amacalan, Malasiqui, Pangasinan with area of 9,156 sq.ms.	492,640.00
9.	TCT #s 249367-249370 – Four (4) parcels of agr'l/comm'l land w/ poultry houses in Bo. Mermer, Manaoag, Pangasinan Total Area – 7,000 sq.ms.	671,100.00
10.	TCT # 31917 – A parcel of resd'l/comm'l land with 2 storey residential bldg. (90 sq.ms.) and bodega (120 sq.ms.) in Poblacion, San Carlos City, Pangasinan w/ area of 1,521 sq.ms.	1,982,200.00
11.	TCT # 31918 – A parcel of resd'l/ land with improvement located at Poblacion, San Carlos City, Pangasinan area of 745 sq.ms.	6,351,000.00
12.	TCT # 261307 – A parcel of resd'l land with improvements in Poblacion, Urbiztondo, Pangasinan with area of 136 sq.ms.	356,000.00
13.	TCT # 33165 – A parcel of agr'l land in Brgy. Guelew, San Carlos, Pangasinan with area of 4,656 sq.ms.	18,624.00
14.	TCT # 246431 & 246433 – Two (2) parcels of resd'l land in Poblacion, Calasiao, Pangasinan with total area of 400 sq.ms.	680,000.00

If for any reason the above mentioned date is declared a non-working holiday, then the public bidding shall be held on the next working day at the same time and place aforementioned.

Bidding forms may be obtained from the Office of the Head, Pangasinan Lending Center, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan. Prospective bidders are enjoined to inspect the above listed properties before entering their bids.

The sale of the properties shall be "AS-IS-WHERE-IS". The winning bidder/s shall take possession of the awarded properties without seeking assistance from the Bank.

The bank reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein or accept the bid proposals which in its judgment is most advantageous to the Bank. The bank's decision on the matter shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) VP DAVID P. CAMAYA
Chairman
Committee on Bids and Awards and Disposal of Bank Properties

(PDI – February 19, 2003)

PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF FLYING SUIT for the PHILIPPINE FORCE.**

The approved budget for this contract is **P18,225,500.00.**

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held on **March 4, 2003, 9:30 A.M.** at the **PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **February 19, 2003** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Two Thousand Pesos (Php2,000.00).**

The bidders shall submit their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes at the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **March 20, 2003 at 9:30 A.M.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. **563-94-02 or 563-93-74.**

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO P. OPIDA
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI–Feb. 19 & 26, 2003)

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INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and bid for the selection of the University's strategic partner in the planning, development and management under a long-term lease agreement of Phase I, a 37.5-hectare component of the 98.5-hectare

University of the Philippines North S&T Park.

The UP Science and Technology (S&T) Park (North and South sectors) is envisioned to promote synergy between the academe and industry in Research and Development (R&D) collaboration in high-technology fields (e.g. IT, Biotechnology, Education Technology, Energy Systems, etc.). The entire UP S&T Park occupies a total aggregate area of 163.5 hectares located in two non-contiguous sites in the UP Diliman Campus, Quezon City; the UP North S&T Park (98.5-hectare property along Commonwealth Avenue), and the UP South S&T Park (65-hectare property along C. P. Garcia Avenue).

The UP S&T Park offers access to the University's academic resources, IT infrastructure, support services, and many other unique location advantages, such as: research-active PhD faculty, specialized research and training laboratories, specialized libraries in different fields, computing facilities, fiber-optic network, training rooms and facilities: short- and long-term accommodation facilities; and sports, shopping and community amenities.

Prequalification forms and Terms of Reference (TOR) may be obtained from the UP North S&T Park Secretariat, Director's Office, 4/F ISSI Bldg./Virata Hall, UP Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 from March 3 to March 7, 2003. Deadline of submission of duly accomplished prequalification documents will be on March 14, 2003. After the evaluation of the documents submitted, the prequalified developers shall be duly notified of the schedule of subsequent activities. For inquiries, please call Tel. No. 920-5301 to 99 loc. 4717; or Tel. No. 920-6923, 927-9238; Fax 927-1034 (c/o Ms. Ludy Cubillas); e-mail: *lourdes.cubillas@up.edu.ph*

(Sgd.) RAFAEL A. RODRIGUEZ
Vice-President for Development

(PDI – Feb. 19 & 26, 2003)

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Feb. 23, 2003 (Sunday) 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Francisco Benitez Center Foundation
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Seminar Fee: P1,200.00 (inclusive of all materials)
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Call Geraldine: 7247990, 7252936, 7233132

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AT Onstage GREENBELT

On **February 24 and 25, 2003**, the INQUIRER's **JOB MARKET** will host "**JOBZ Resumé Central**" at On Stage Greenbelt. A two-day activity geared at gathering and collecting resumés with the aim of building a database of possible applicants for **JOB MARKET** advertisers to further make their hunt for the right applicant seem almost effortless.

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FCMC 12785/2002
IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE
HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
MATRIMONIAL CAUSES NO. 12785 OF 2002

BETWEEN

VICTORIA VINEGAS *Petitioner*
Also known as **VENIEGAS, VICTORIA MARRON**

And

MOHAMMAD HANIF ASIS *Respondent*

A DIVORCE PETITION HAS BEEN FILED AGAINST THE UNDERMENTIONED MOHAMMAD HANIF ASIS late of 231 Nancamaliran East, Urdaneta, Pangasinan, Philippines who may apply at the Family Court Registry at M2 Wanchai Law Court, No.12 Harbour Road, Hong Kong for a copy of the Petition. If within one month he has not communicated with the Registry the Court may hear the case in his absence.

Registrar

(PDI-Feb. 19, 2003)

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Management and Staff

Of

CARDINAL SANTOS MEDICAL CENTER

Condoles with the family of the late

HILARIO S. MURILLO, SR.

Vice-Chairman
who peacefully joined his Creator on February 16, 2003
at the age of 68.

We join his bereaved family, relatives and friends in their prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Felicidad Chapel of Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Mass will be offered at the following dates:

Feb. 17, 2003	12:00 n.n.
Feb 17-21, 2003	6:00 p.m.
Feb. 22, 2003	7:00 a.m.

Interment will be on February 22, 2003 (after the 7:00 a.m. Mass) at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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News that makes
a difference

Dr. Victor Teodoro Nañagas

Died in the Grace and Peace of Christ, Our Savior
on February 16, 2003 at the age of 88.

Please join his wife **Dr. Amparo Navarrete Nañagas**; his children **Ms. Virginia Nañagas-Bactad, Drs. Victor, Jr.** and **Maria Teresita Cruz Nañagas, Drs. Veronica** and **Bruce Devon, Mr. Vitaliano II** and **Mrs. Rosario Bulaong Nañagas, Ms. Victoria Navarrete Nañagas**; and his grandchildren **Alexis** and **Angelica, Victor III** and **Kris, Valerie** and **Pat Killian, Vivian, Octavia, Allegra, Bartholomew, Vanessa,** and **Vitaliano III**; and his relatives and friends, in prayer to Him Who loves and accepts all.

He lies in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, EDSA Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on February 22, 2003 at the Cementerio del Norte after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the AMVI Research and Development Fund. Thank you.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
Matthew 10:39

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, MANAGEMENT AND STAFF
OF
SAN FERNANDO ELECTRIC LIGHT & POWER CO., INC.
EXPRESS THEIR DEEPEST SYMPATHIES
TO THE FAMILY OF

JESUS S. LAZATIN

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
WHO PEACEFULLY JOINED HIS CREATOR
ON FEBRUARY 17, 2003 AT THE AGE OF 80.

HIS CHILDREN **CLARITA** AND **BONNY**, **BABES** AND **SENG**, **JIMMY**, **MARCO** AND **AIDA**, GRANDCHILDREN, SISTERS, RELATIVES AND FRIENDS REQUEST THE PIOUS READERS TO PRAY FOR THE ETERNAL REPOSE OF HIS SOUL.

HIS BODY LIES IN STATE AT THE FAMILY RESIDENCE OPPOSITE ESSEL SUPERMART ON CONSUNJI STREET, CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, PAMPANGA.

INTERMENT WILL BE ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2003 AFTER THE 9 AM MASS (METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL) AT THE OLD CEMETERY, CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, PAMPANGA.

SY HUA BING DE GUZMAN

of Sta. Cruz, Marinduque and Lucena City
has joined his wife "Maria Rosa Kho"
and peacefully rests in the infinite warmth
and embrace of our Lord
on February 17, 2003, at the age of 74.

His loving children, **Nemelia & Arthuro**, **Ely & Romy (†)**, **Marilyn & Charlie**, **Elizabeth & Romulo Jr.**, **August & Josephine**, **Jupiter & Janna**, **Wison**, **Reynaldo**, **Gerry**, **Jenevieve & Ivan**, **Clarence Clifford**, grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Holy Rosary Chapel, C. M. Recto St., Lucena City.

Interment will be at St. Ferdinand Memorial Park, Lucena City, on 22 February 2003, Saturday, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

In Loving Memory of

ANGELINA TRONQUED BIUNAS-ALONSO

February 17, 2003

Her late husband **Carmelo** (†), children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren:

Milagros (Noni) & Jean François Pluquet
Christina, Catherine & Christophe Hemard, and **Alexandre**
Victor and **Maxime**

Josefina (Rose/Jo), and

Cristina (Tina) & Lt. Col. Gabriel Franco, USAF
Joseph & Rachel, **Philippe**, and **Victoria**
Isla

together with relatives and friends, request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Garden Suite, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati.

Interment will be announced later.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

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MEGAMALL: **635-0219; 635-0220**

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate; ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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S.K. Jesus Singian Lazatin

May 9, 1922 – February 17, 2003
Knight of St. Sylvester
Past Grand Knight
Past District Deputy
Knights of Columbus 3709
Past Faithful Navigator
St. Ferdinand General Assembly
Member, Board of Governors Philippine National Red Cross
President, PNRC Pampanga-Angeles City Chapter
Past President, Rotary Club of San Fernando, Pampanga

Peacefully joined his Creator and his loving wife Celia Tirona Lazatin on February 17, 2003.

He is survived by:

His children:
Clarita & Bonny; Babes & Seng; Jimmy and **Marco & Aida,**

Grandchildren:
Carlo, Andro, Gino, Miguel, Sabrina, Matthew, Timothy, J.P., Moselle, Danelle, Jonathan, Celina, Mikee and **Nikki,**

Sisters:
Corazon, Anita and **Carmen,**

Nephews and nieces,

Brother and sisters-in-law.

His remains lie in state at the Lazatin ancestral residence at A. Consunji St., City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

Interment will be on Friday, February 21, at the San Fernando Catholic Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Metropolitan Cathedral.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL SEMINARY BURSE will be appreciated.

CESAR SICAT GOPEZ, SR.

Peacefully joined his Creator on February 14, 2003 at the age of 76.

His bereaved wife Mary; children, children-in-law and grandchildren:
Cesar, Jr. and **Aida Dimalanta** with **Oliver, Grace** and **Jennifer;**
Lolita and **Benito Escaño** with **Angelica, Miguel, Karina** and **Roberto;**
Jose and **Rosita Gaudia** with **Jonathan, James Edward** and **Mayette;**
Antonio and **Olive Carrasco** with **Dennis;**
Teresita and **Carlos Gonzales, Jr.** with **Toti** and **Andrea;**
Sisters and brothers-in-law: **Esther** and **Roger Estrella; Ophelia** and **Honorio Guevarra,** and other relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Our Lady of Fatima Chapel, Edison St., University Hills, Caloocan City. Interment will be on Thursday, February 20, 2003 at Eternal Memorial Gardens, Leeland Drive, Baesa, Caloocan City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Chapel.

On the 1st Death Anniversary of

Gen. Manuel T. Pepino, MNSA

February 20, 1942 – February 20, 2002

Masses will be offered today at the following:

LIBINGAN NG MGA BAYANI
Fort Bonifacio, Manila .... 12:00 noon
HOLY INFANT JESUS, SHRINE
Davao City .... 4:00 PM
GSIS PARISH
Davao City .... 6:00 AM

His wife Emilia, and children Marjorie, Marvin Manuel, Marie Louie, Mildred, Manuel Jr., Michelle & Minerva, request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... INQUIRER OBITUARIES

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Ramon Alberto Salanguit De La Rama

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord on 17 February 2003 at the age of Fourteen.

His bereaved parents **JOJO & MITA DE LA RAMA;**
only brother **JOAQUIN LORENZO;**
his paternal grandparents **HORACE & PING DE LA RAMA,**
his maternal grandparents **ERNESTO & BARBARA SALANGUIT,**
uncles, aunts, cousins, friends, classmates, and Yaya **Pina** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will lie in state at #1 Alta Vista Drive, Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Interment schedule shall be announced later.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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Tels. 715-1025; 715-1031; 715-1027
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THE GARDEN CHAPELS
C. Raymundo St. cor. Mercedes Ave.,
San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels 747-8599; 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
243 A B. Fernandez Ave., Dagupan City, Pangasinan
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1305 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City;
Tel. 732-0309; 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad,
Mandaue City, Cebu;
Tels 346-2543, 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
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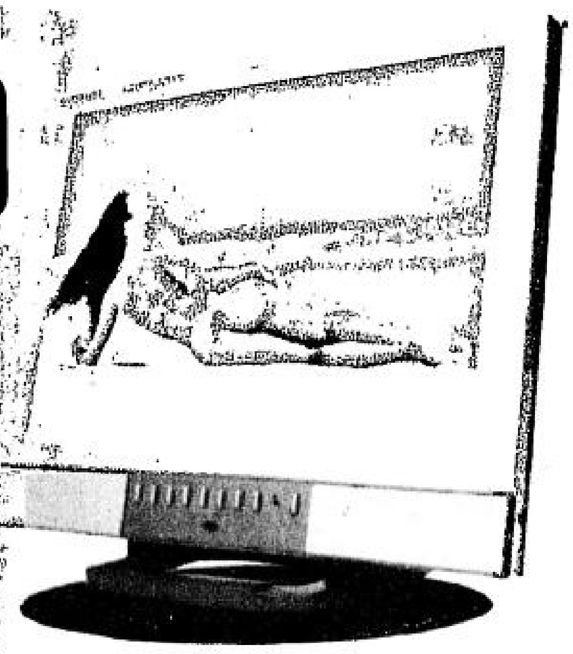

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BUSINESS

CalPERS pullout tied to dirty money lobby

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE CALIFORNIA Public Employees Retirement System has said it will not reconsider a plan to pull out its investments in the Philippines unless the Philippines resolves its anti-money laundering issue with the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force.

This was the message relayed to the Philippine delegation by CalPERS during a recent meeting to refute the 2002 ratings made by the pension fund's research consultant, Wilshire Consulting, Philippine Stock Exchange president Ernest Leung disclosed.

In a news briefing, Leung said the Philippines filed a formal protest against the benchmarks used by Wilshire Consulting, which recommended that the Philippines be dropped from CalPER's list of investment destinations.

During the discussions, however, Leung said the anti-money laundering issue cropped up as an even bigger concern for CalPERS regardless of Wilshire Consulting's assessment of the Philippines.

In a 59-page report, Wilshire Consulting ranked the Philippines 24th out of a total of 27 monitored emerging markets, downgrading its rating based on eight quantitative performance criteria.

For instance, the report gave the Philippines a score of 1.53 from a scale of 1-3 (with 3 being the highest) in terms of investment climate compared to the rating of 2.06 in 2001.

"They said that even if we get a perfect score, if we can't get out the restrictions in the anti-money laundering law, they will not invest," Leung said.

DOF bucks proposed 30-day tax break for diesel imports

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance shot down yesterday the energy department's plan to seek a 30-day import tax reprieve for diesel, citing the government' pressing need to raise revenues.

Finance officials believe waiving the 3-percent import duty on diesel will deprive the government of at least P500 million in tax revenues.

The Department of Energy had sought a 30-day import tax reprieve for diesel importers to cushion the impact of higher world crude prices on jeepney and bus fares.

"Although I am in full support of shielding commuters from the impact of rising oil prices in the international market, a suspension on oil taxes is not the rightful method," Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said.

Energy Secretary Vince Perez said earlier he was asking the finance department to support his proposal to suspend import taxes on diesel.

Perez said this could be done, citing a previous instance when the Palace issued an executive order in November 1999 to suspend tax and tariffs on crude oil and other petrol products.

The Bureau of Custom collected P5.28 billion in duties and taxes on fuel importation in 2002 translating to revenues of P440 million a month.

Of the total, P3.13 billion came from duties paid on crude oil and P2.15 billion on finished fuel products.

Crude prices peaked to a 28-month high of $36.70 per barrel last week on worries over a possible US attack on Iraq.

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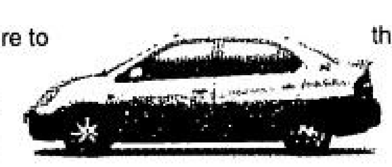

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Spectacular! Spectacular!

2bU! packs your prom with a wallop of tips—from picking your date, your outfit and your salon to choosing your flower, even the songs you love to slow dance to. On the way to prom queenhood, we traced the evolution of this special night and prepared a pre- and post-prom checklist for your OC (obsessive-compulsive) pleasure. And for your date, choose between the Turvey twins or Matchbox Twenty. From J. Lo to your 'lola,' we've got your prom covered

SURVEY

What's your most memorable prom experience?

By Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent

AHHH, proms... what else do starry-eyed high schoolers are looking forward to right now? It's the perfect excuse to ask your crush out, get all dolled up, dance and party till daybreak, at least for most of us.

While some have lived out their fantasies, others have spent their big night gritting their teeth and wishing they were somewhere (or with someone) else. But whether it was a dream come true or a nightmare, the memories of prom (or graduation ball) night will always forever linger. 2bU! strolls down memory lane as we interview a few veterans.

It was the first time our school had a prom, so the dress code wasn't really made clear. Half of those who attended were in formal clothes while the rest were dressed in school uniforms. That was pretty funny.—**Chinky, 22, computer programmer**

I was late. My date was standing on a chair so the doggie wouldn't get to her dress. She was freaking pissed, man.—**Bim Barbieto, 19**

We went to an abandoned hotel in Antipolo and had sex after.—**Louie Que, 18**

The afterparties.—**Sean, 19, rockin' it out at Oklahoma University**

La Salle Greenhills prom. My f---ing mama's boy of a prom date actually asked his mother to ask me out for the prom. What's worse, on prom night, he showed up at my place with his parents! Argh! They picked us up *pa*... I could just die!—**Sam Aguilar, 19, would never go out with a mama's boy again. Ever.**

When my crush asked me to dance... He was my first dance in two proms.—**Kristine, 20, fourth-year college**

Not being able to dance with my date, dancing with my friend's date, finding out I was wearing boxers under my prom dress, going to Starbucks after the party when I wanted to go somewhere else, and going home early with hot chocolate stain on my nose and my date not telling me about it.—**Maui Reyes, 20, wishes she brought Stuart Townsend instead**

Sneaking out with my friends and going to a piano bar to sing and play tunes... kind of like having our own mini prom.—**Ethel Avisado, 20, hoping to graduate**

I dumped the first guy I asked to the prom and went with a total stranger... who also turned out to be a total blockhead.—**Baka_yarou, wallowing in self-pity**

It was really late when the party ended, and I was so scared that my parents wouldn't let me in anymore. But horror of horrors, my date's car wouldn't start! We weren't close, so it was awkward at first. But we got to talk and ended up falling in love with each other. I didn't care if my parents grounded me for a while. It was worth it.—**Teng, 18, still grounded**

My date was gay, but I had so much fun gossiping with him and checking out the hot guys. I wouldn't trade him for anyone else.—**Nixie, 21**

You know this prickly feeling that you sometimes get at the back of your neck? I had such bad case when I realized that my ex's girlfriend was staring at me while dancing, even though I didn't know who she was at that time. Creepy *sobra.*—**gelato, 16**

My date (who was my crush) became prom king, and his ex won as prom queen. They ended up getting back together.—**pipay19, student activist**

I was in first year college, and two of my friends and I were the prom dates of our gay third-year high-school friends. Our dates were even more made up than we were! We felt overaged, so we pretended that we were still in high school!—**Ava Frondoso, 20, AdMU**

Seeing so much cleavage that it hurts to look at them.—**Ace, 22, female and sadly "ungifted"**

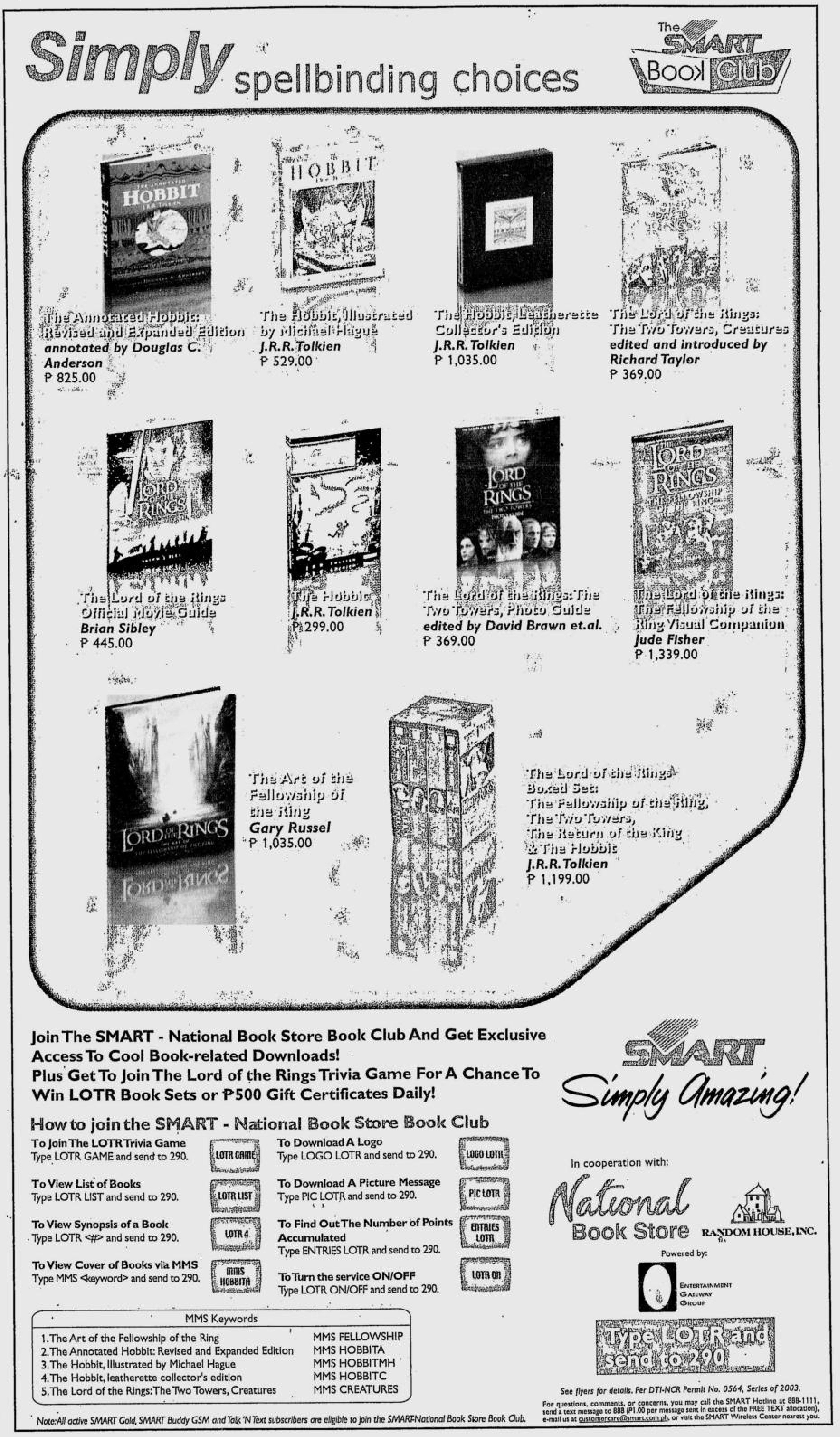
My girlfriend had to go out of town for a sports competition, so I decided to go stag even though I was looking forward to going with her. When I was about to leave, someone rang the doorbell and there she was, all sweaty and her hair all tangled, but to me she never looked more beautiful.—**paddington bear, 23**

My date kept picking his nose and tried to cover it up but we knew what he was doing anyway. *Sayang gwapo pa naman.*—**Pat, 19, looks like Daria from MTV**

I got to dance with my teacher who had been my crush for the longest time.—**Tonzy, 17**

The *barkada* of my date hung around in the hotel lobby, and it was so irritating the way my date would leave the ballroom every chance he got. We decided to leave him there and go out afterwards by ourselves. I met *pa* a cuter guy at the bar.—**Fiona_Apple, 18, won as Stag Queen**

My date was so pretty... even though she didn't win as prom queen. I was so honored to have her as my date.—**Caloy, 20, hopeless romantic**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The prom in retrospect

By Anne Rose A. Elicaño
2bU! Correspondent

THE MOST glamorous of all high school rituals has been around for quite a while. So 2bU! showcases the most popular prom trends of each era. See how these parties have evolved from the '40s to the present. Perhaps the best things about a prom such as escorting a pretty date, savoring your first dance, having fun with friends despite the event's formality have remained unchanged. But that's another story.

E-mail the author at elicano_ar@yahoo.com

	Grandparents('40s-'50s)	Parents('60s-'70s)	You (Now)
Venue	School hall or the ballroom of the best hotel in town	Hotel ballroom	Hotel ballroom
Transportation	They meet at the venue itself. After the party, the girl will be brought home by her brother or her parents.	Ford LTD, Chevy Corvette, Ford Mustang	Honda CRV, Corolla, one big van for the *barkada*
Decorations	Fresh flowers and balloons	School colors were prominent	Balloons.Sometimes, it depends on the theme.
Tunes	Classical music	Live bands like Red Fox, Birth of the Cool, and Electromaniacs. Temptations Led Zeppelin hits	John Mayer, Norah Jones, Stephen Speaks and faster hip-hop beats
Dance moves	Waltz, foxtrot, tango	Soul, boogaloo, shing-aling, etc.	Couples still shy away from the slow dance. Fast dances are considered more fun.
Special ceremonies	Tthe formal introduction of dates, *rigodon de honor*	Candle lighting ceremony, exchange of tokens, class officers' dance	Crowning of the prom king and queen and their royal court.
What she wore	Gown with a sash and a full skirt	Halter, cross-over and bouffant dress	Poncho-style gauze shawls and bead jewelry. Long skirts and formal tops cut midriff.
What he wore	Barong	Coat and polo shirt. Some guys went all out and opted for suits with cummerbunds.	Coat and polo shirt, inspired by what's stylish in GQ
Accessory she couldn't go without	Her (or her mother's) best jewelry	Class ring (which she will give to her beau after the prom)	Cell phone
Accessory he couldn't go without	Starched handkerchief	Class ring (for the same purpose).	Cell phone
Undisputed prom guru	An older sibling or a wise aunt	The *barkada*	Older sister/cousin or a teen magazine (but she wont admit it).
***Pa-simple* move she did to get asked out**	Request her parents to arrange something. Sometimes, she'll ask her prospect directly.	Ask her classmate to set her up with the cute older brother. Sometimes, she'll ask him straight out.	Mention to him that she has a prom then discreetly wait for him to ask her who she's going with. Sometimes, she is more direct.
What he said to invite her	"Beautiful, may I escort you to the prom?"	"Hey, what are you doing on the (date of prom)?"	"I have a prom three months from now (pause). Will you go with me?"
If she accepted...	"I am honored and happy you asked"	A non-committal "I'll check first, okay?" followed by a "yes" the next time he calls or visits her.	"Why me?" followed by an eventual "Hmm. Okay"
Favorite excuse used for refusing	"My curfew is much earlier than that"	"My parents don't know you so it's likely I couldn't go."	"Er, my dad is super strict!"
If she could go out with an actor, it would be...	Rogelio de la Rosa, Clint Eastwood	Lloyd Samartino, Ronnie Henares, Donnie Osmond, Roger Moore	Richard Gutierrez, Orlando Bloom, Josh Hartnett
If he could go out with an actress, it would be...	Carmen Rosales, Carmen Soriano	The Revilla sisters (Tina and Maritess), Olivia Hussey and Sandra Dee	Rhea Santos, Zhang Ziyi and Alexis Bledel
Prom fantasy dream sequence	For her: having a date who is both handsome and good in the dance floor. For him: pressing his cheek against her while dancing and imagining that he could kiss her.	Having a fun night, a good trip.	Good-night kiss

INQGRAPHIC: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

10 things to remember on prom night

By Arlene M. Paredes
2bU! Correspondent

YOU'VE probably heard older friends say that the high school years are likely to be the best years of your entire life. Although some may disagree with that, they will probably concede that the Junior-Senior (JS) Prom is one of the events that help make those years the best time of your life.

But there are some things to bear in mind as you enjoy one of the best parts of high school—the JS Prom.

Girls, think beautiful. Don't fret about how you're going to wear your makeup to stand out or how you're going to style your hair. On your prom night, less makeup means more beauty points. Similarly, neater haircut for boys will mean more *pogi* points.

Girls, you may want to ask an expert about how to highlight your facial assets like your eyes or cheeks. But make it light. And if you can enjoy the night without makeup, that would mean even less hassle for you. Feel good about yourself.

Wear your favorite perfume and you will instantly feel good. Scent has a way of increasing not just your confidence but your energy level as well. You can forget your lipstick or blush-on, but don't forget to wear your favorite perfume.

Girls, spend time with friends. Don't let your escort, boyfriend or suitor keep you away from the others. Although you expect prom night to be romantic, remember that you are celebrating youthfulness and there's no better way to do it than by spending a significant amount of time with your friends who will reminisce on this magical or surreal (expect the unexpected) evening with you 10 or 20 years later while your escort/date/suitor may be "history" by then.

Girls, take care of your date. Although you may think you're a princess for the evening and should be the your date's center of attention, your date is hoping to get as much attention from you as you expect from him. He would appreciate it if you wouldn't let your gaze rove in search of cuter guys.

Guys, be gentlemen and courageous at the same time. I knew a guy who bought a ring for the girl he was wooing and planned to give it to her on prom night. Alas, the girl's other suitor was all over her that evening. The first guy was not brave enough to even ask her for a dance.

What happened to the ring? He asked the girl's best friend to give it to her. The best friend didn't like the idea so she said she'd wait until the guy himself was ready to personally give the ring to the girl. But the best friend got tired of waiting and told the object of his affection, who was so disappointed.

The girl actually admired the shy admirer so much and had really wanted to spend prom night with him but she found him distant that night. She confronted him and he put the ring on her finger some months later. But the girl later decided she wanted a more courageous man.

Up to now, the guy is still wondering what could have happened if he walked the extra mile and showed his special feelings for her at an earlier opportunity.

Girls, learn to politely say "no" if you really don't want to accept an invitation to dance. Rejection is bad enough on prom night, but polite words will help minimize damage to egos.

Decide to have fun. If you looked for and focused on the best things of the night, you are likely to enjoy your prom night and make it truly magical and worth remembering. Remember there's a proper time for everything and prom night is the time to have clean fun and, if you want, a little bit of romance, very little if you know what's good for you. You don't want to turn the evening into a nightmare that you would wish to forget for the rest of your life.

Bring a camera. Don't think it's embarrassing to bring one. Chances are the people who'd tell you you're so *jologs* for bringing a camera, would be asking for copies of your "Kodak moments" at prom night.

After the prom, even if you're too "high" or too dopey, write about what happened. Record the highlights of your prom night in your journal or diary while the memories are still fresh. Several years down the line, your prom night accounts—magical or surreal—could make you smile.

If you have a date, give him a token of appreciation for being a good gentleman. A photograph of the two of you together would be good. If he is courting you, he'll really appreciate it. But if he is your boyfriend, you may give him a special note or card for making your prom night even more special.

As for guys, the best souvenir you could give your date is your attitude. It's hard to find dates who can be good friends these days, if you know what I mean. So please, for your own sake, be at your best behavior.

E-mail the author at lhen@postmark.net

Choosing products for one's makeup repertoire

Lora Gabol

I HAVE received a lot (surprisingly!) of e-mail questions from readers who still think MAC is the nickname of that creepy fast-food clown Ronald. I imagine how agonizing it might be, being surrounded by a flurry of promising products yet not having any clue on how to include them in your makeup repertoire. Today, we're going back to makeup 101.

I've been hearing about the wonders a concealer can do. I tried it once, but ended up looking like a Dalmatian with light spots on my face—that surely turned me off. I wasn't blessed with flawless skin, and I break out more often than I can manage. I use a lot of powder and foundation to hide my zits, and although they "disappear," my face is more chalky than smooth.

MICHIE

A concealer does deliver if it's perfect-looking skin you're after. While some people might consider powder or foundation as the best beauty tools to disguise imperfections, I believe that young people like us don't need a ton of gunk to look flawless. Why cover up your entire face if you only need to camouflage a couple of blemishes? Speaking of blemishes, you might be having more of those than you can handle because of all the prods you pile on your face. Let your skin breathe.

I've encountered makeup artists who have just about tried every shade and formula of concealer on my face. Some swore by green-toned concealer for reddish spots, and one even used a lavender product on my under-eye area. Playing with rainbow-colored concealers might make you feel like a pro, but I write this off as a big no-no. It is still best to find a shade closest to your skin color if you wish to camouflage pimple scars and blemishes. Put on an ample amount with your ring finger (it puts the least pressure) or better yet, a tapered concealer brush. Using a light touch, pat on the area (do not rub) until edges are barely noticeable, then set with a matching powder.

For extraordinarily evil under-eye circles (read: really, really dark), find a shade one or two tones lighter than your skin. This trick instantly makes the eye area brighter.

Tip: Prime the eye area with a light eye gel for a smoother surface. Try Origins Eye Doctor.

As for the formula your particular skin condition needs, there are plenty to choose from. Liquid concealers (they usually come in a wand with a sponge tip applicator) are easiest to blend and great for under-eye application, but I wouldn't recommend them for all-night partying as they notoriously slide off as quickly as your alcohol tolerance. Use it during the day, especially if most of it will be spent chilling indoors. The Body Shop makes great liquid concealers in yellow-toned shades. Stick concealers come in handy for girls who are constantly on the move. They do a great job masking tough blemishes.

For under-eye circles, I advise a layer of moisturizer before applying stick concealer for a sheerer effect. Try L'Oreal Quickstick, Sue Devitt Automatic Camouflage Concealer and Bobbi Brown Essentials Foundation Stick. Medicated formulas are a big bonus for girls with acne-prone skin. Salicylic acid and tea tree oil are zit-busting ingredients to look for, and are found in The Body Shop Tea Tree Oil Cover Stick and L'Oreal Plenitude Pimple Eraser Stick. My favorite among all formulas available today: cream concealer. Cream products are most versatile and have amazing staying power. Makeup companies have developed duo-toned cream palettes for customized blending. Great picks: Cinema Secrets Concealer, Bobbi Brown Concealer Kit, Acmedica Concealer.

What's the deal with three-in-one beauty products, which you can use for eyes, cheeks, and lips? My work does not give me enough time to fix myself in the morning and I desperately need advice on this.

DARLENE

Multitasking beauty products have been made for busy girls like you. Three-in-one products have flexible formulas and (more often than not) come in neutral shades to suit eyes, cheeks and lips. Think pinkish browns, plums, nudes. A word of caution, though: Some eye/cheek/lip products in the market today are meant to be used as highlighters instead of the real color deal. Watch out for sheer metallic silvers and golds, unless you are after the material girl look.

A good basic product for everyday use is The Body Shop's Lip and Cheek tint in a rosy pink shade for a subtle punch of color. NARS Multiple has an array of shades to choose from. Shu Uemura's new Bon Bon Fluo Collection come in candy colors for an innocent look.

This is embarrassing to admit, but I freak out using eyelash curlers! My sister once pulled out half her lashes with that metal gadget and I've been traumatized since. I am, however, so in love with the baby-doll look and I need curly lashes to complete it. How do you use a curler correctly?

DOLLY

I know how much terror eyelash curlers can cause. Not to ignore the call of *kikay*, I compromised with a cutesy plastic lash curler for "practice" before I finally moved on to that grownup metal contraption. After a while of using it, I think I've gotten the hang of the whole process. What you really need is a reliable curler (not one of those you get at sidewalk *tiangges* for P20) and a lot of TLC. If you're really into this baby-doll business and are willing to save up a chunk of your allowance, get one of the great Shu Uemura's curlers, if not one made by Shiseido. These brands fit Asian eyes incredibly well. If you're more budget-conscious than vain, Manicare and Revlon offer satisfactory curlers as well.

It takes delicate precision and a steady hand not to pinch your lids or pluck out your lashes. Carefully position the curler near the roots and squeeze the curler slowly but firmly for 10 seconds. It doesn't stop there, unless you want extreme 90-degree angles for lashes. Move the curler from roots until tips, squeezing for 10 seconds every time for a flirtier curl. Don't forget the clear or colored mascara for holding power!

Tip: Try warming the curler with a blow dryer for a few seconds. The extra heat helps curls last. Also, change the silicon/rubber strip every three months to prevent build-up that might cause infections.

I'm what you'd call a makeup newbie. The only cosmetic I own is lip balm! Anything with color makes me nervous about messing up and looking worse than I started, which is a shame because I have a fetish for lip products! I keep walking in and out of Beauty Bar checking out all the lipsticks and glosses, but I don't know which will suit me. I have way too many Chapsticks and Lip Smackers and I want to try other products. I am still in high school (but I'll be in college next year), so I guess red lipstick is out of the question.

LATE BLOOMER

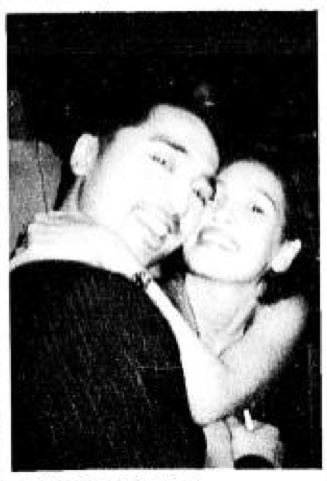
I will let you in on a secret. I have not one lipstick in my entire makeup collection. Looks like you're not the only late bloomer around. The thing is, I prefer looking young and fresh over immaculately made-up and sophisticated anytime, which probably explains why I am partial to lip glosses and lip tints.

Since you are young, light colors in shimmery finishes will suit you best. Pinks and peaches are sure to bring out a young exuberance. I only recommend lipsticks for special occasions that won't allow you to constantly retouch (like weddings), just so you won't be caught without lip color in pictures or in front of your date.

For everyday look, however, stick to transparent tints and sheer washes. And don't get intimidated by color! Another great thing about being young is being able to pull off practically every look there is, given the right attitude, of course. My "first love" will always be Bloom's lip gloss in tint, and I use it up to this day. I have added at least a hundred more to my collection, which just goes to show the unlimited choices out there.

OLIVE MAFIA. Boompy Martel, Dritter Sarmiento, Junboy Leonor and Nicky Jurado

DJ DELIGHT. O! heartthrobs Owens Sun and Ino Olondriz


HUG-A-DELIC. Rem Zamora and Ana Bitong

O-TWO! Andy Cruz and Boompy Martel at Olive

Club scene waves the Olive branch

Tim Yap

THE DARK strip by the stretch of Makati Avenue where the club kids used to hang out remains the same—heavy traffic, lots of parked cars on both sides, fish ball stands.

A burly bouncer opens the doors and the same thumping music is heard, only this time more upbeat than usual.

Welcome to Olive, the renaissance of the club formerly known as Orange. As an *asalto*, the owners and members decided to be in fabulous formals—just apt for a nightlife institution that signaled the rise of clubland this side of town.

Most of the men came in the suit-and-tie combo, which went well with the Mafiosi-loungey look that the club now sports.

The ladies came in long dresses. In ubiquitous spaghetti straps and little black dresses, they paraded up and down the staircase of Olive, clutching their little martini glasses. It was a scene straight out of Truman Capote.

New perspective

"I haven't seen you in ages! Mwah, mwah!" "Long time no see, hear, etc, etc..." went the exchanges among the urbanites and party animals the whole evening. Well, the party scene does go around in circles, you know.

While some say that the scene has reached its peak and is on a decline, others think there will always be new blood that will be ecstatic over new developments. It's called evolution, baby.

Supastars from the club scene of late hobnobbed with the up-and-comers. An exciting part of any event is seeing fresh, young blood injecting new perspective on the scene. That means new DJs, artists, fashionistas, party people, a new crowd, a new mind set, a change of cycle.

So to Olive and the new set—here's to a new and enlightened experience in clubbing!

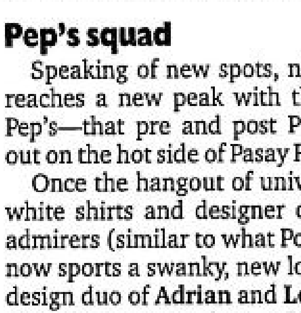
Pep's squad

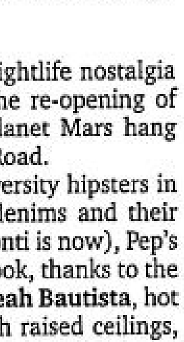
Speaking of new spots, nightlife nostalgia reaches a new peak with the re-opening of Pep's—that pre and post Planet Mars hang out on the hot side of Pasay Road.

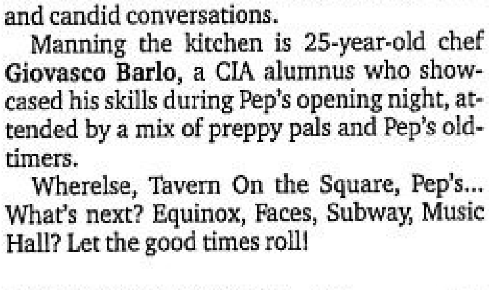
Once the hangout of university hipsters in white shirts and designer denims and their admirers (similar to what Ponti is now), Pep's now sports a swanky, new look, thanks to the design duo of **Adrian** and **Leah Bautista**, hot partyphiles themselves. With raised ceilings, earth tones and low slung leather furniture, the scene is set for cocktails, culinary treats and candid conversations.

Manning the kitchen is 25-year-old chef **Giovasco Barlo**, a CIA alumnus who showcased his skills during Pep's opening night, attended by a mix of preppy pals and Pep's old-timers.

Wherelse, Tavern On the Square, Pep's... What's next? Equinox, Faces, Subway, Music Hall? Let the good times roll!


PEP TALK. RJ Ledesma and Ernest Gala


F FLAIR of Angel Aquino


B SEEN AT PEP'S. Lyn Agustin, Cor-Cor Bitong and Yvette Lejano of Bayo

DESIGNER DEPOT. Rina Avecilla, Patrice Ramos Diaz, Randy Ortiz, Gerry Katigbak and Vic Barba at Pep's

Here comes the sun

Summer is just around the block and that means back to the gym for a lot of partyphiles who intend to indulge come Holy (to others, hoe-leee!) week. (A party hardy telecoms giant reportedly blocked off 300 rooms for the summer season.) The heat is definitely on.

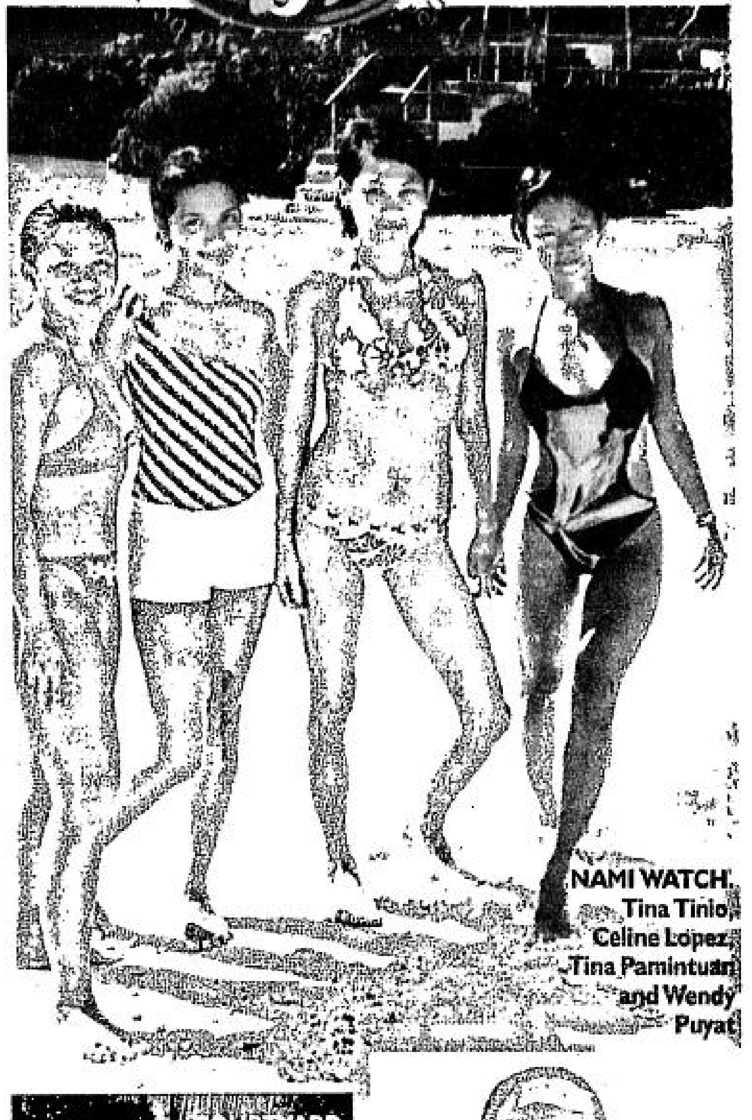
It's always nice to take one step back and be able to look within and laugh at ourselves once in a while. Quiet does not necessarily mean empty and noisy does not immediately mean happy. Or unhappy. Our happy or sad state lies with our ability to assess and analyze where we are and where we want to go. Indulge, look back and learn. Then move on.

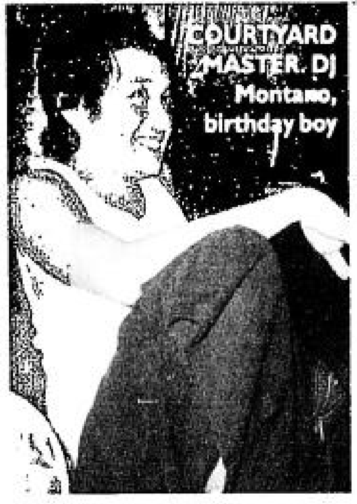
Enjoy your week, partyphiles.

STYLE FILE. Itong Torres and Richie Ortega

OLIVE SET. Bianca Zobel, Amaya Barretto and DJ Sergio Urzola

PHOTOS: TIM YAP AND BOOMPY MARTEL


NAMI WATCH. Tina Tinio, Celine Lopez, Tina Pamintuan and Wendy Puyat


COURTYARD MASTER. DJ Montano, birthday boy

NAMI GYUD. Lex Ledesma and Tina Tinio

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TEXT: Hanapin at i-text ang BNT code sa **399** (Smart/Talk 'N Text) para makasali. Bawat successful message sent costs P2.50. Para sa mga first-time texters, i-text ang REG, BNT code at ang inyong complete name, sex, complete address at birthdate. Sundin ang format sa baba:

<REG> <BNTcode> <COMPLETE NAME> <SEX> <COMPLETE ADDRESS> <BIRTHDATE>

Sample: REG AABB123456789 - Tom G. Cruz Male 14 Apolinario St. Brgy. Salcedo Makati City October 11, 1968

Itago ang mga product wrapper na may BNT sticker, product pack na may BNT code, BNT coupon na ibinigay ng mga participating retail establishments o ang parte ng baso na ibinigay ng mga participating ISD-JDP accounts na may BNT code para sa validation process kung sakaling mabunot ang iyong pangalan.

Kapag hindi naipakita ang mga ito ay madi-disqualify ang entry.

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- Batangas (043) 757-2039
- Butuan (085) 342-3656
- Cagayan de Oro (088) 858-6112
- Cavite (046) 515-0194
- Cebu (032) 412-9215
- Davao (082) 227-3936
- General Santos (083) 381-0204
- Iloilo (033) 336-6054
- Isabela (078) 682-6795
- Laguna (049) 562-1574
- Legaspi (052) 820-0608
- Naga (054) 361-2594
- Nueva Ecija (044) 600-0709
- Pampanga (045) 850-6357
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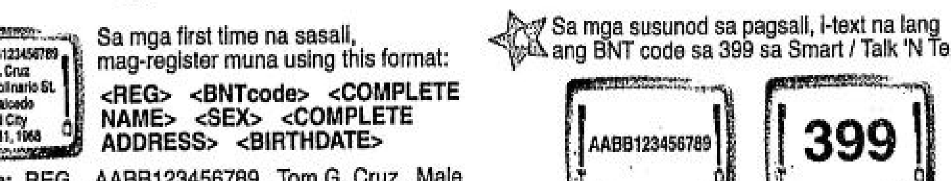
BNT code na nasa ibaba sa 399 - Smart / Talk 'N Text
AABB123456789
Buy N Text
AABB1234567

REG AABB123456789 Tom G. Cruz Male 14 Apolinario St. Brgy. Salcedo Makati City October 11, 1968

Sa mga first time na sasali, mag-register muna using this format:

<REG> <BNTcode> <COMPLETE NAME> <SEX> <COMPLETE ADDRESS> <BIRTHDATE>

Sample: REG AABB123456789 Tom G. Cruz Male 14 Apolinario St. Brgy. Salcedo Makati City October 11, 1968

Sa mga susunod sa pagsali, i-text na lang ang BNT code sa 399 sa Smart / Talk 'N Text

AABB123456789

399

Promo period is from January 22, 2003 to May 11, 2003. See posters for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit # 2457 series of 2002

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Cornstarch	Queen Cornstarch
Corned Beef	Purefoods Corned Beef
Fish Sauce	Datu Puti Patis
Flour	Purefoods Flour
Gelatin	Queen Gulaman
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Hotcake Mix	Queen Hotcake Mix
Hotdog	Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdog
Hot Sauce	UFC Hot Sauce
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Starch	Queen Cassava Starch (Tapioca)
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Diaper	Huggies Dri-Fit Huggies Dry Comfort Kimbies Plus
Facial Tissue	Kleenex
Feminine Napkin	Kotex Newtex Pads Kotex White Pads Kotex Fresh Pantiliners
Paper Napkin	Empress Kleenex Party Napkin
Powder Detergent	Ariel
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Shampoo	Rejoice Rich Rejoice Complete
Retail	
Bakery Products	participating bakeries / bakeshops
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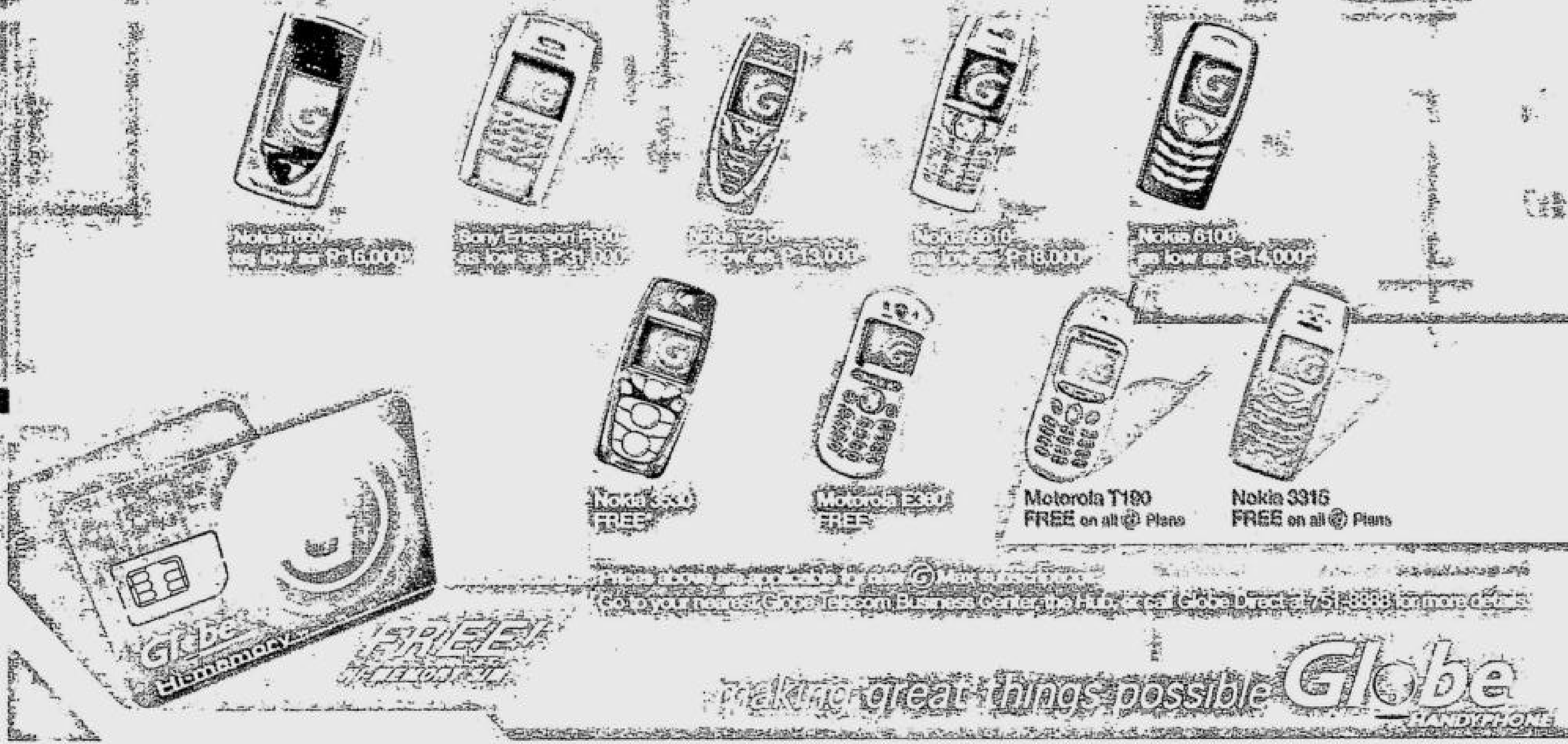
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BIRTHDAY ____ mm/dd/yy SPOUSE NAME ____
HOME CONTACT NO. ____ MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME ____

OFFICE/COMPANY NAME ____
BUSINESS ADDRESS ____ No. ____ Street
____ Barangay
____ City ____ Zip Code
BUSINESS TEL NO. ____
PREFERRED BILLING ADDRESS ☐ HOME ☐ OFFICE

CREDIT CARD NAME
☐ BPI ☐ Citibank ☐ Diners Club
☐ Equitable ☐ Unicard ☐ Standard Chartered
CREDIT CARD NO. ____
EXPIRY DATE ____ 3 Digits at the Back of Card ____
☐ INSTALLMENT ☐ ONE-TIME PAYMENT
Installment Term ☐ 3 ☐ 6 ☐ 9 ☐ 12 months
CREDIT CARD BILLING ADDRESS
☐ HOME ☐ OFFICE ☐ OTHERS ____

Handset Model Order ____
Line Application Plan
☐ Ⓖ Text (Plan P500) FREE Text: 500 FREE Calls: 20 min.
☐ Ⓖ Max (Plan P800) FREE Text: 250 FREE Calls: 100 min.
☐ Ⓖ Talk (Plan P1200) FREE Text: 150 FREE Calls: 250 min.
☐ Ⓖ Talk Plus (Plan P1800) FREE Text: 450 FREE Calls: 250 min.
☐ Ⓖ Max (Plan P3500) FREE Text: 650 FREE Calls: 750 min.
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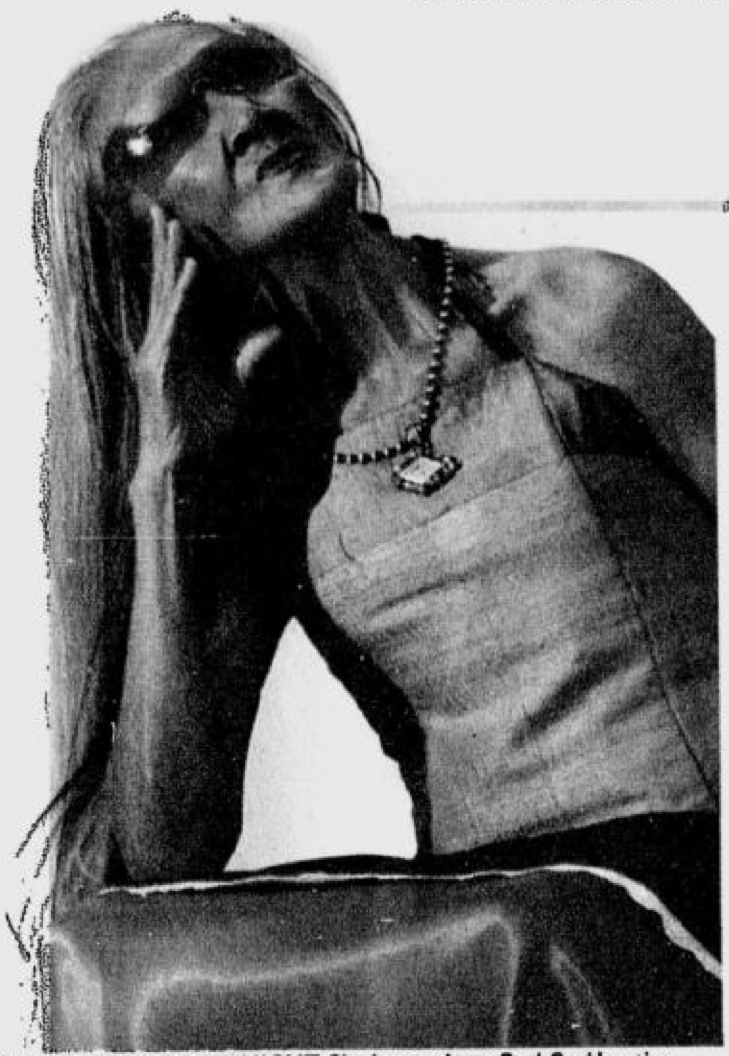


DREAMING OF PROM NIGHT. She is wearing a Sari-Sari bustier worn atop a lingerie gown, Folded and Hung necklace, Mich Dulce apron and a pair of Silhouette eyewear

Prom shocker!

Text, creative direction and styling by Tim Yap
Photos by Mike Alquinto

GOING crazy this prom season? Don't fret. Your gown may not be ready, and your date hasn't confirmed yet, but instead of spending your precious time worrying about details that may cause wrinkles, just sit back, relax and play. The promenade is an experience to enjoy, savor and look back with fond memories.

So give your designer a call, raid your grandma's closet or run to the mall for the most precious finds—mix and match. Apply the "something, old, something new, something borrowed and something blue" (okay, maybe not blue) formula to the biggest ball of your campus life. For some, this may even be your last—so savor it.

The worst thing that can happen is coming to the prom with an identical twin in an identical outfit, so inject as much of your own personality as possible.

For the ladies, let go of your princess fantasies—you should have done that on your 7th birthday party at the latest. Instead of layered fabrics, wear an obi in a different way, trim your dress with ribbons and laces. Treat yourself as your own school project. Nothing is more fulfilling than a fab collaboration between you and your designer slash stylist slash *costurera*.

For the men, ditch the daddy tie and opt for a leaner, younger sillhouette. You wouldn't want to be hopping over to a coffee shop looking like a poor impersonation of your preppie uncle. Look for something more colorful, more edgy—something only you, and not your dad or uncle, can pull off.

Looking back, nobody looked good at the prom anyway—but you'll outgrow it. So while you're at it, enjoy the night to the fullest.

Use the 'something new,
something old,
something borrowed
(drop the something
blue)' formula

ALL EYEWEAR FROM LES LUNETTES DES PARIS, LOCATED AT THE PODIUM

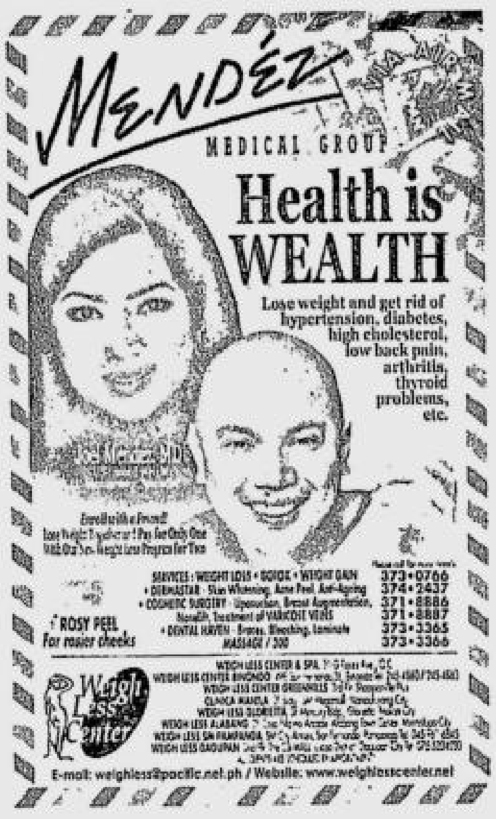
ALL CLOTHES OF BRAD TURVEY BY PENSHOPPE

MAKEUP:
XENG ZULUETA OF SHU UEMURA

MODELS:
GREG AND BRAD TURVEY, LILIA CANTACAY

SPECIAL THANKS TO PAOLO BUSTAMANTE, TED TARIELA, JOY GO, TINA TINIO AND JETT CARPIO

PROM DECISIONS. Greg is in a Vittorio Sari Sari criss-cross top with black shirt and pants by Penshoppe. Lilia is wearing a Sari-Sari sequined top, Mich Dulce ball skirt and Wink obi worn as sash. Necklace by Folded and Hung. Brad is wearing a Wink Rhett Eala jacket, shirt and corduroy pants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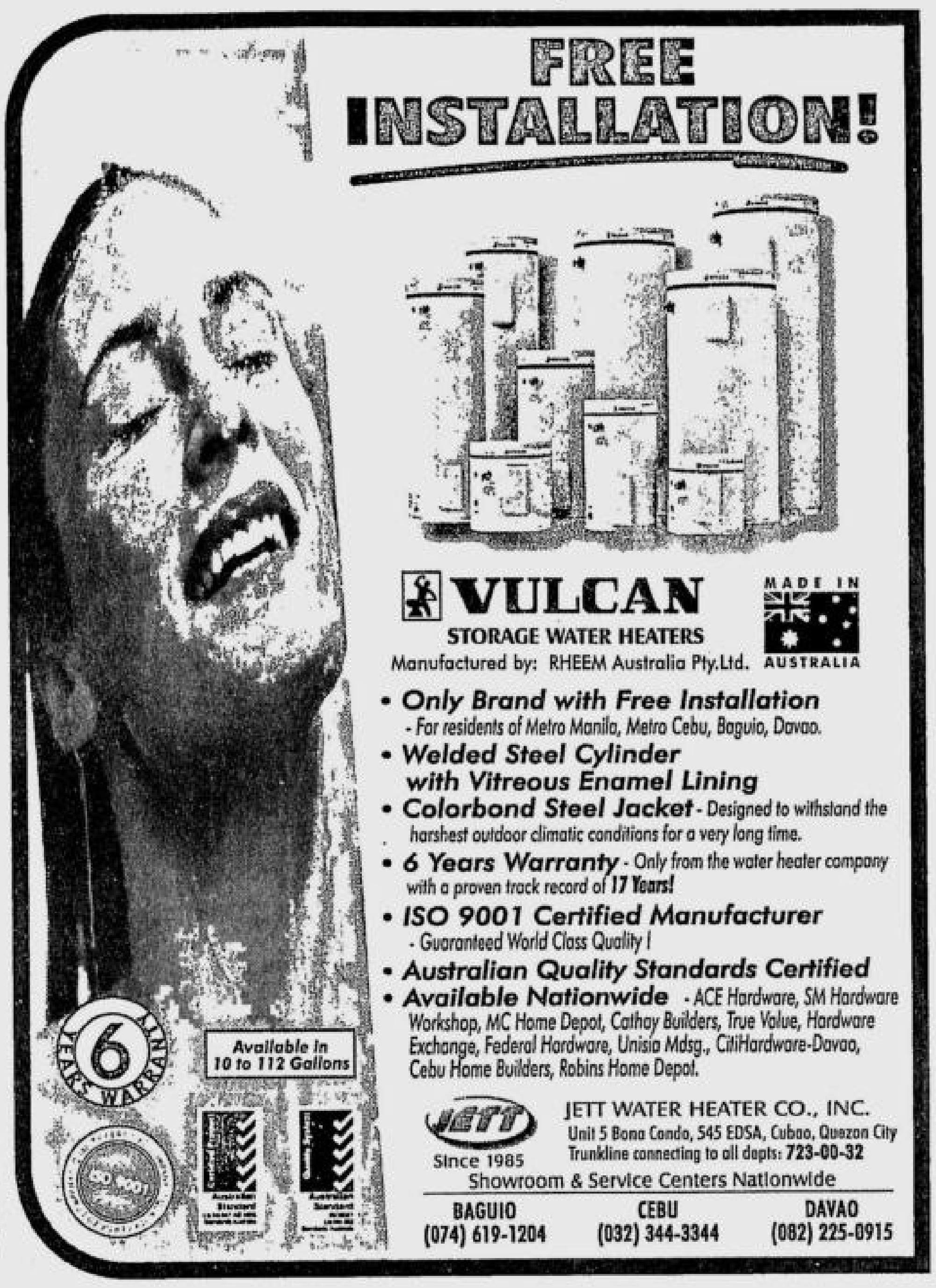
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SMART

SOMEWHERE IN TIME. Greg and Brad are both in Rajo Laurel barongs with striped Penshoppe tees as inside shirts and their own sneakers. Lilia is wearing a Sari Sari hat and bag, a Wink Rhett Eala knit top with a Mich Dulce skirt. Eyewear by Gucci

MOD TIMES. Greg is wearing a Folded and Hung ladies jacket and camel turtle neck shirt with a Penshoppe striped tube top. Lilia is in a Tippi Ocampo gown layered with Penshoppe wrinkled skirts and a Rajo Laurel beaded cardigan. Heart-shaped shades, stylist's own. Brad is wearing a Quark shirt by Mich Dulce, obi by Vic Barba from Pam Pastor, khaki jacket and blue pinstripe pants and Wink belt

Prom Shocker!

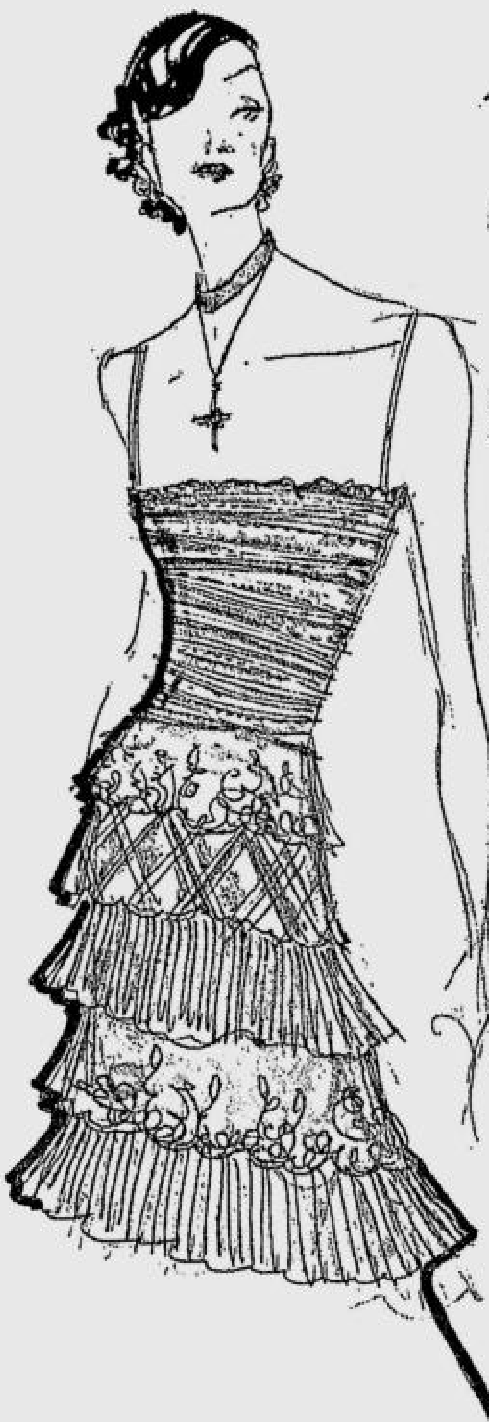
Inject as much of your own personality as possible in what you wear

MANDY MOORE, EAT YOUR HEART OUT. Greg and Brad are in Rajo Laurel suits. Greg is wearing a white Rajo tie, a black Vic Barba tie and Folded and Hung belt. Brad is wearing a Wink Rhett Eala belt and white leatherwrist badge worn as a tie. Lilia is wearing a Wink Rhett Eala top, Rajo Laurel corset obi and striped skirt. Eyewear by Salvatorre Ferragamo

CHAINS AND CHARMS. Necklace by Folded and Hung accessories, charm bracelets from Penshoppe

Prom *fashion* forecast

by Jason Doplito
2bU! correspondent



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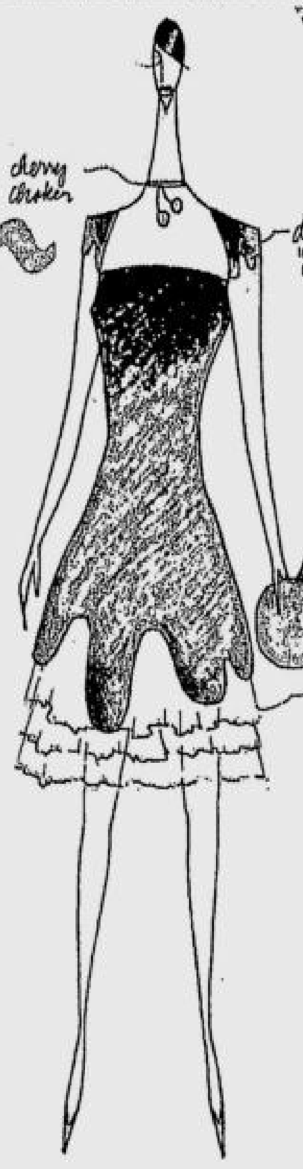
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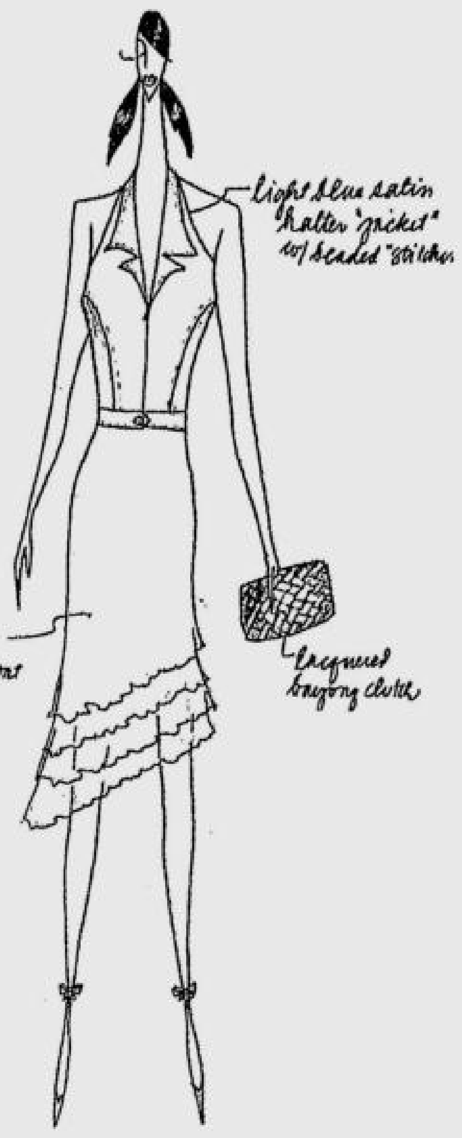
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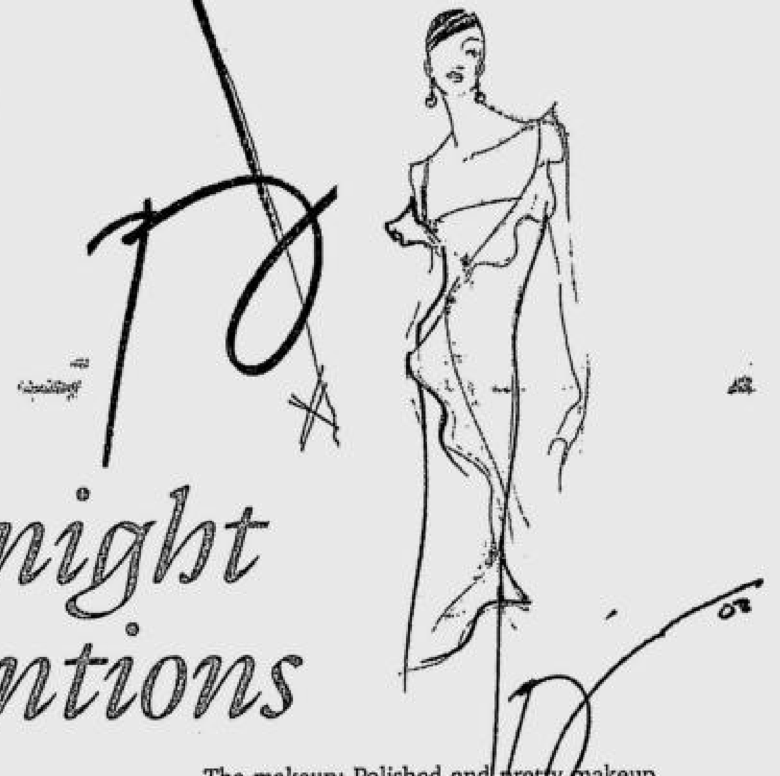

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Rajo Laurel

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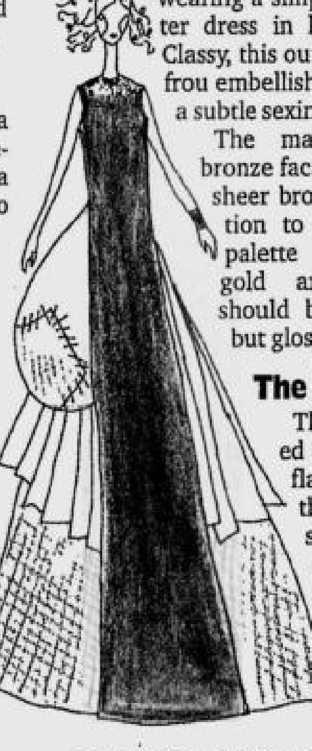
Miss Posh



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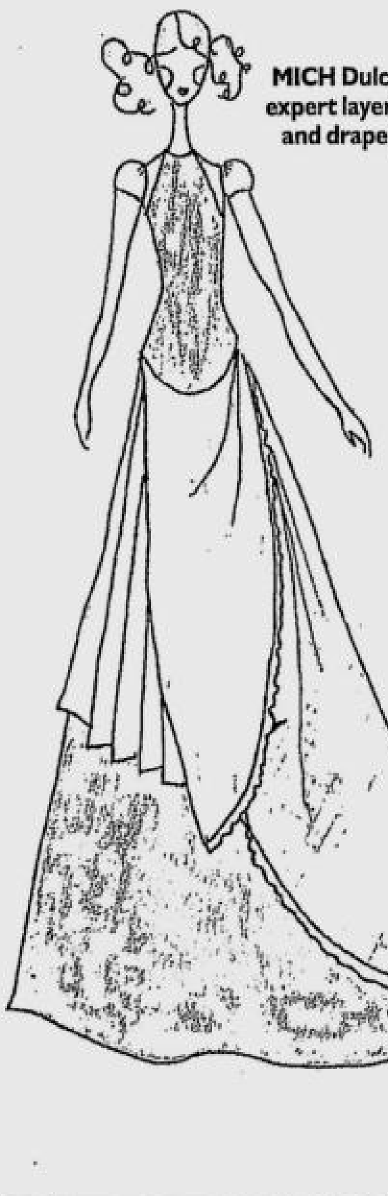

MICH Dulce's expert layering and drapery

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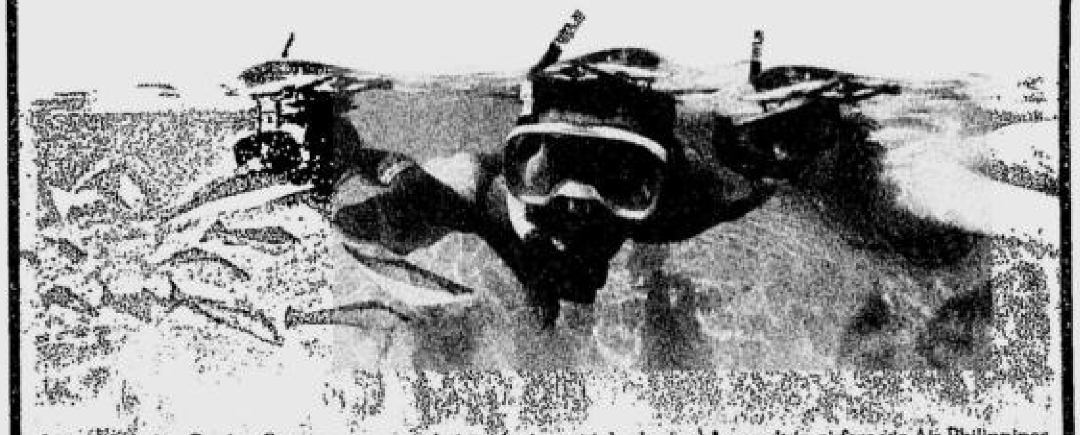

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2bU! correspondent

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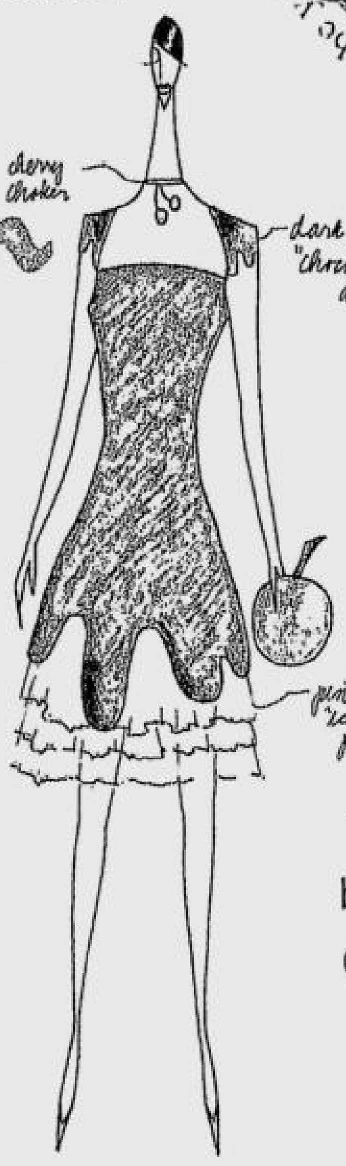
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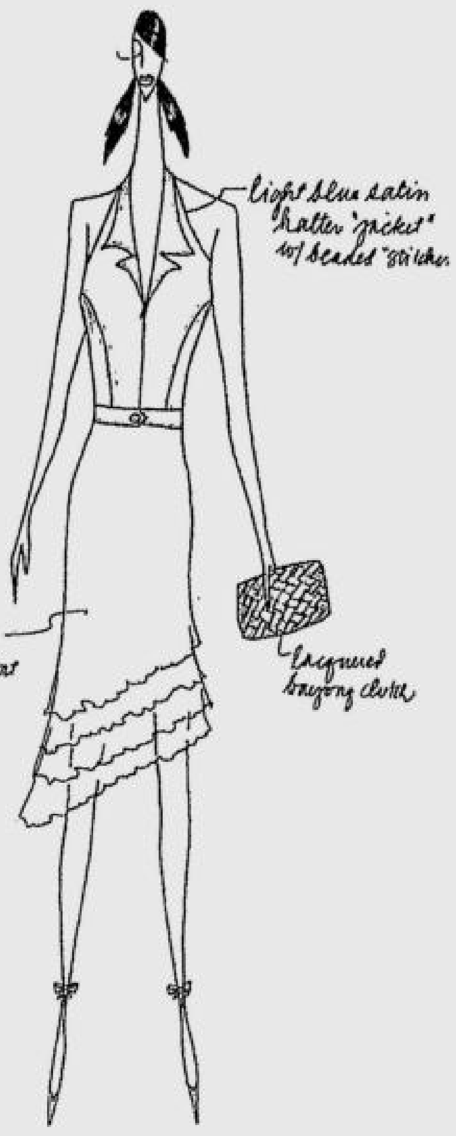
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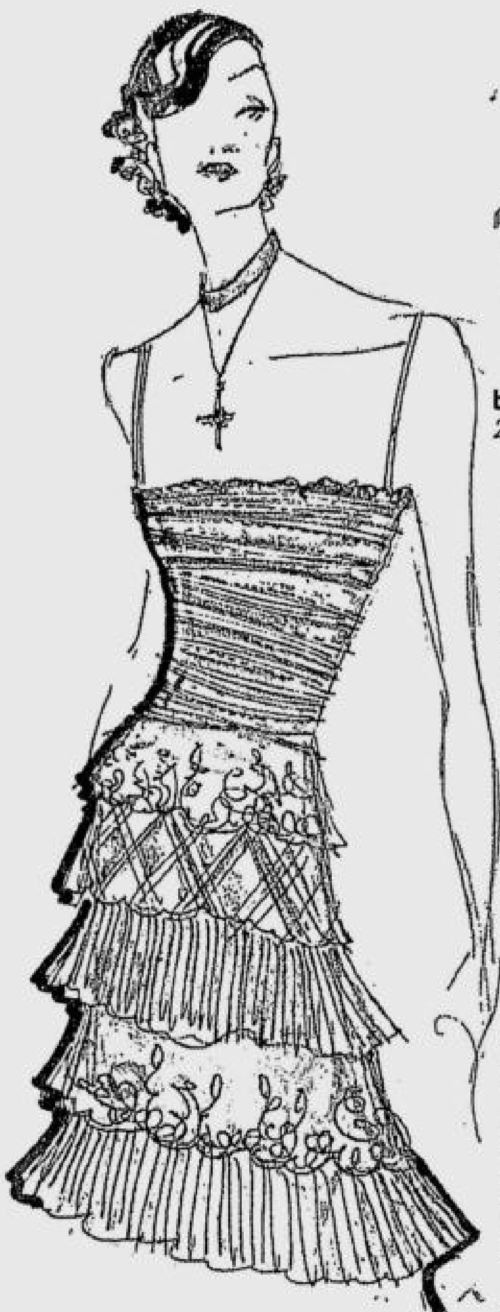

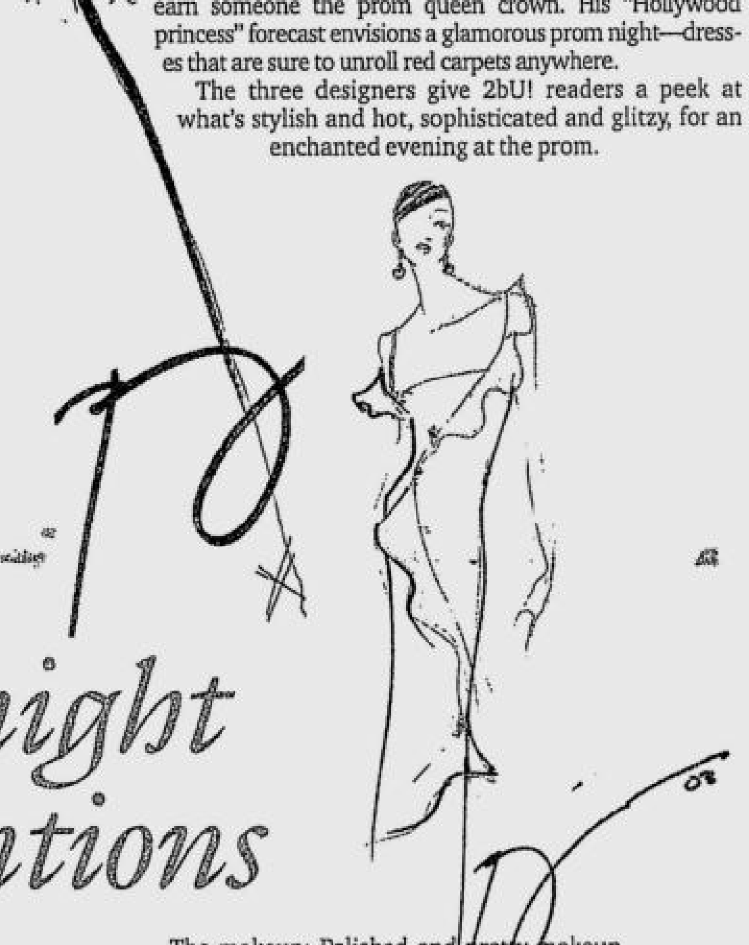

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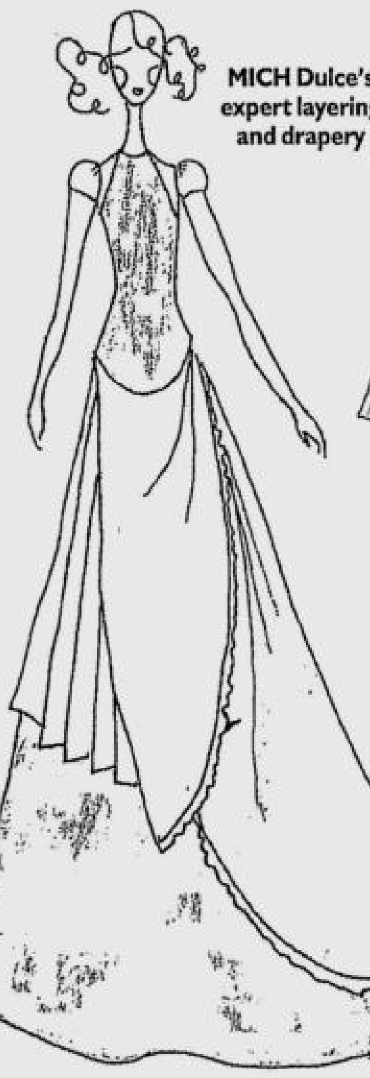

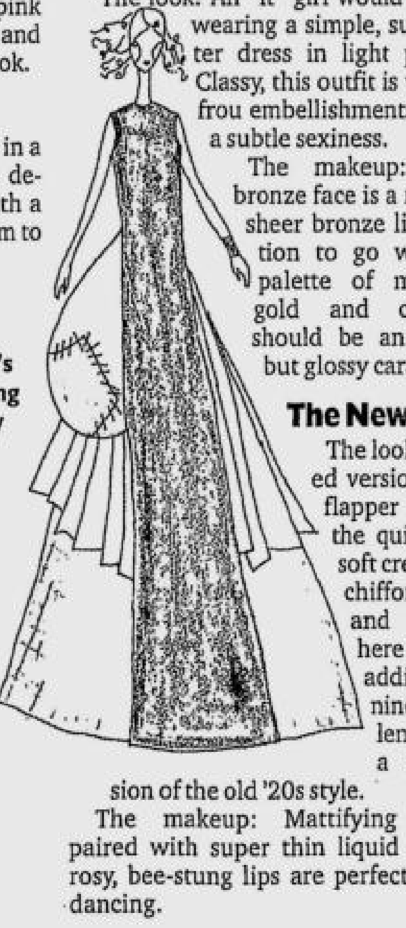

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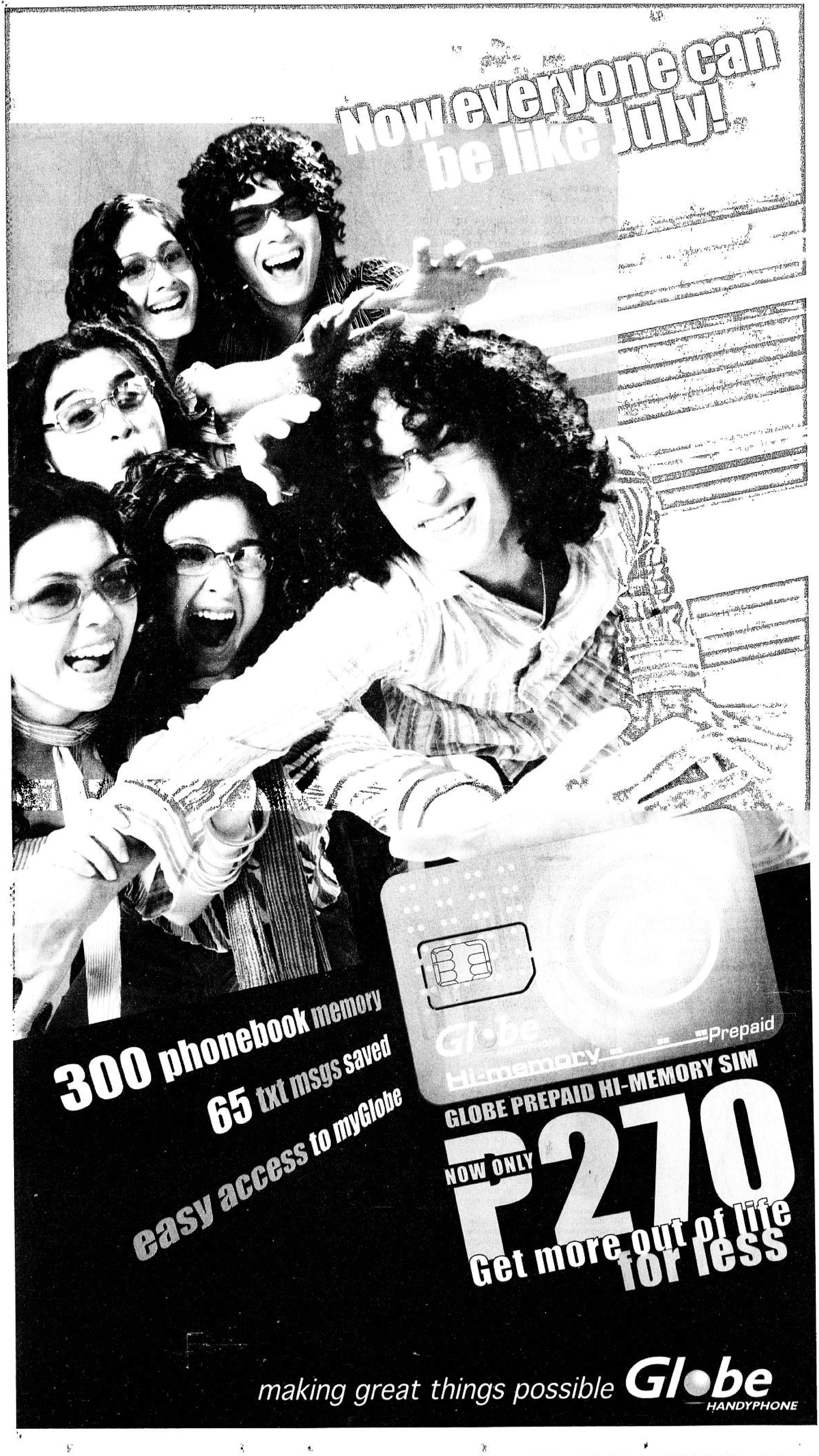
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2bU! goes salon-hopping for hair and makeup style SOS

Text by Margot Aissa C. Tan
Photos by Tammy David

> You've got makeup, acne, eyebags and facial craters to attend to ASAP but don't worry, help is on the way

GIRLS get excited over prom night for the most obvious of reasons, and not one of them has anything to do with boys.

Every girl wants to be the prettiest girl in the room and make everyone else green with envy.

It's as simple and as complicated as it gets. You've got hair style, hair color, hair cut, and out-and-out hair annihilation in your armpits and legs to worry about. You've got makeup, acne, heavy eyebags and insulting facial craters to attend to ASAP.

Here at 2bU!, we love our readers, and we take good care of them. So, fresh from a teen-lifestyle correspondent's personal makeover, 2bU! presents Manila's best and finest stylists and salons.

Franck Provost

With branches in both Makati and in Alabang, this salon based in Paris, France, can do wonders for your hair and makeup while exerting minimal effort and in no time at all. Just ask for Vicky Yap and Mary Jane Cabarloc. Meticulous yet fast workers, they don't fall under the typical category of moody and unyielding hair and makeup artists.

Vicky keeps your makeup young and simple. You won't end up looking like your mom, grandmother, or anyone else but yourself. She chooses shades that are natural, and brings out the best in your facial features. Their makeup line consists of Darphin (read as darfan) products, which they also sell in their salons, and those from Cinema Secrets as well.

MJ was able to spruce up my short and difficult-to-deal-with hair without any trouble. She gave it both body and style.

With makeup at P880 and hair at P670, most would find this salon a tad expensive. And if you want the French guys to do it for you, the prices go up to P1,100 and P1,090 respectively.

H Salon

Some of you may not have heard of this salon before, but I'm sure the name Henri Calayag rings a bell. He's the owner of this new and wonderful salon located within Rustan's Makati. Australia-trained Rachelle Aguila took the pain of doing hair and makeup for the restless and yakky old me, and executed it beautifully. She explained every step to me, from the putting on of foundation, contouring of the face, to the opening up of my small and slanted eyes. Rachelle went for the subtle version of expressive and smoky eyes and picked a toned-down shade for my lips.

She wanted my hair to be reminiscent of Halle Berry's, and true enough, it turned out to be dainty but different. It was soft enough to look cute, and at the same time strong enough to stand out. Although it did take quite a long time for everything to be done, the time spent was worth it. Some would find the makeup to be *makapal*, but it definitely looked great and appeared just right when the pictures came out. Hair and makeup costs P1,550, and if you want the creative director to do it for you, it would cost a hefty P1,800.

Emphasis

Hidden behind Rockwell's first Starbuck's branch is the Japanese-themed and tranquil world of Emphasis. The place is well-designed, with excellent lighting, Zen-like ambience, and elegantly themed rooms.

No less than Teng Roma, the salon's managing director, supervised my hair and makeup session carried out by the multiawarded but soft-spoken Danny Katalbas.

Emphasis was the only salon that managed to finagle my short hair into an updo, although my bangs were left to be a mess with too much height and volume. However, I was

2bU! GOES/ E2

EMPHASIS spruces up the author's hair with her own bracelet.

DANNY Katalbas (left) of Emphasis does the messed-up do.

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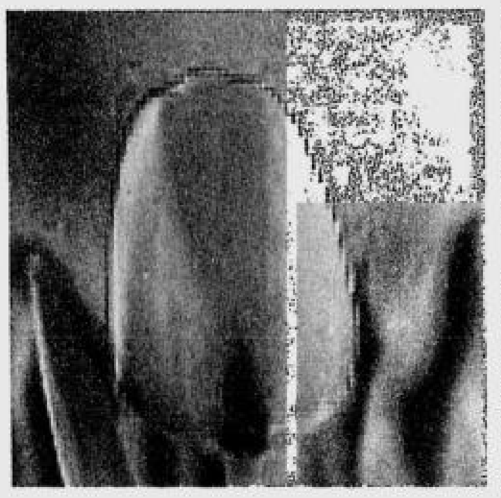
Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0280 Series of 2003

Promo corsage may be saying more than you know

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

EVEN before florists can replenish their stocks after the large demand on Valentine's Day, they now have to get ready to meet orders for corsages as prom season nears.

Usually, the guys buy the corsages for girls and girls get boutonniere for the guys. This always struck me as impractical, since the girl would know best what flower would suit her dress. I wanted to avoid the nightmare of the getting flowers that would clash with the dress and, even more painful, getting pricked with the pin.



But flowers actually should be chosen with more care, for blooms can impart meanings you probably do not want to convey. Or it can tell your date words you cannot speak. In fact, giving flowers to convey a specific message is not new nor is it uncommon.

Way before e-mail and texting, forbidden relationships among slaves and the upper crust developed through flowers. This way, there would be no written and compromising proof of the relationship. It was also a great help to those who could not, for one reason or another, express their feelings.

In this season of proms, choose flowers not because they are obnoxiously expensive but because of the special meaning they carry. If the flower that will carry your message is too big for a corsage, be generous and give a bouquet. Heck, sometimes a bunch is cheaper than a corsage.

Rose

Perhaps due to the variety of meanings it can convey, the rose is the most famous of all corsage flowers. The meanings are primarily related to color and the stage of the blossom. Rosebuds are for innocent love while fully opened blooms may convey love and/or gratitude.

Generally, red roses symbolize love, white ones say, "I am worthy of you," and pink, "Please believe me."

For those who are madly in love with their dates or who cannot express cheesy messages like these, roses are definitely the way to go.

Tulip

Tulips are way too expensive as they do not flourish in a tropical country like the Philippines. But for the classy and loaded date, the bloom should rank high among possibilities.

The flowers are usually too big for a pin corsage, so they are presented in bouquets or wrist corsages. Red tulips supposedly mean a declaration of love while yellow compliment the girl for her smile. Multicolored ones are a compliment to a girl's eyes.

Iris

The iris is most appropriate if you are just friends attending the prom together. It symbolizes friendship, faith and hope. The bloom is also used to pay compliments.

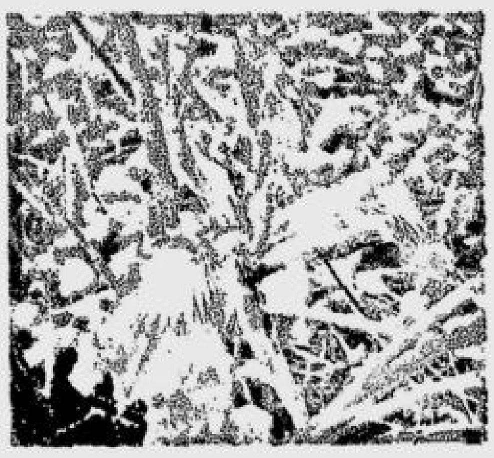
For those who do not want their date to harbor any illusions of a romantic involvement, the iris is a subtle, not to mention a most aesthetic, way to get the message across.

Flowers should be chosen with more care for blooms can impart meanings you probably do not want to convey

Lily

Used both for bouquets and corsages, lilies symbolize innocence and youthfulness. In Roman mythology, the first lily is said to have sprung from the breast milk of the goddess Juno, wife of the leader of the gods, Jupiter.

In the Middle East, the flower is sacred to the goddess of fertility while Christians associate it with the Virgin Mary. Whatever meaning you choose to convey, make sure the flowers are small enough for a corsage. Otherwise, give a bouquet.



Baby's breath

Often used as fillers for bouquets and corsages, baby's breath is one of the most versatile flowers and is suitable for different occasions. Whether it is weddings or baby showers or proms, baby's breath means the same thing: innocence and constancy.

Gardenia

Before orchids and roses became the norm for boutonnieres, gardenias were used for their simplicity. They stand for subtlety and artistry. They could also symbolize secret love. So for all the ladies in love and wanting to express their feelings, the gardenia is the flower of choice.

Carnation

Carnations can be very cheap or very expensive. Extremes also apply to the meanings they convey. A carnation in solid color can mean "Yes" while a striped one means "No." A pink carnation means you'll never forget the person you're giving it to, while a red carnation conveys admiration.

2bU! goes salon-hopping for hair and makeup style SOS

MJ Cabarloc (left) and Vicky Yap of Frank Provost pose with their work of art

From page E1

able to comb it down and to the side when I got home, and it looked neat and great, as if I really had enough hair to upstyle.

Danny pointed out that makeup would really depend on his client's personality, and he would normally talk to the person first to find out what they wanted. He usually does makeup that's pale and simple, and seldom does he go all out and adventurous. Hair and makeup by junior stylists cost P1,250 and by senior stylists, P1,750.

Fix

Instead of going elsewhere, I urge you to go to one of Fix salon's branches. Fix is new, hip and way too crowded, but it definitely has good and young stylists on board. If you're still wondering how an affordable salon can give you great hair and makeup services, I'll let you in on their secret. They've tapped Juan Sarte and Alex Carbonell of Propaganda Salon to be makeup and hair consultants, respectively. You'll leave the salon looking fresh, without having to carve out an enormous hole in your pocket. Full makeup costs only P550; if you throw in hairstyling, it's only 750. If you want to spare yourself of being in a crowded place, go for the home service, which costs P2,500.

THE AUTHOR with Danny Katalbas of Emphasis

Archie Tolentino did my makeup in a jiffy and gave my face a bright, charged and youthful attitude. Although I was quite disappointed with what they did to my hair (they used a crimper that burnt my already-split ends), I must admit that there's really not much to do with hair that's this short.

So there you have it — the high and low of hair and makeup to guide you for that big day. The clock is ticking, and time is running out. And we haven't even started to talk about picking the perfect pair of shoes and accessories to wear.

Hey, Mr. [Prom] DJ,

play a song for me

Don't just sit there and endure the mushy and cheesy music that is the standard fare on prom night—take charge and give the man in the booth a hits list

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

WHY do prom scenes always cap off a "kilig-infested" plot in teen movies? You can't deny that nothing beats watching puppy love unfold before your very eyes with the soundtrack blaring in full Dolby glory at all the right moments.

But we don't all live in a movie world, and unlike big-screen shindigs, our proms never go into post-production where we get to edit out unwanted scenes and lines. Important as that perfect pair of shoes to go with your prom dress and the right color of flowers for your date's corsage are, the music played at the prom holds the key to a bomb or a bust night.

In other words, play the right kind of music and you're assured a blockbuster of a night, be it as romantic as "She's All That," confrontational like "10 Things I Hate About You," or just downright bloody (think Carrie).

2bU! asked around for the songs that would make for one helluva prom night and here's what we heard:.

"It Might be You." I guess this song is romantic in both content and tune. It's the perfect prom song.—**Maverick**

"Pretty in Pink" by the Psychedelic Furs. The movie was named after that, and it's about the loser-type girl who gets the cute, popular guy.—**Ricci**

It has to be "Last Chance" by Allure. I don't know, it has always been a staple... plus it's perfect for cozying up and winning the heart of your hot date.—**Emma Maglaque, 20**

"Crazy For You" (Madonna cover) by Cris Yuzon!—**Criselle Panlilio**

The Fly's "Got You Where I Want You."—**Panchito, 18**

"Wonderful Tonight," by Damage. It's a very romantic song that fits the occasion.—**Gigette E., 19**

"It Might be You" by Stephen Bishop. I hated that song, but I admit that I danced to it once.—**DMAPS**

"The Way you Look Tonight" because the song says it all... Especially if you have a thing for your date!—**Carmela Sison, 20**

"Constantly" by Vanessa Williams—**Serg Ledesma, 23**

"Moon River!" Incredibly sweet, soooooooo romantic!—**Samara, 19**

Hmmm... a prom song?—**Nino "A" Avenido, 21**

Hole's "Celebrity Skin." Get hold of the lyrics and you'll see what I mean.—**Die Avril, 20**

"Last Dance" by Jenn Simons—**Caloy Garchitorena**

"It's So Hard to Say Goodbye" by Boyz II Men. Because it's a part of every individual, and it's hard to say goodbye to all them high school memories.—**Rico Robles**

"The Way You Look Tonight." Figure it out.—**Famous Anonymous**

"Sway" by Bic Runga. Because everybody digs it.—**Pao, 19**

"Strange and Beautiful" by Aqualung, "Edge of the Ocean" by Ivy, and Nick Drake's "Northern Sky". I find them romantic.—**Psyche, 21**

"Say Goodbye" by Dave Matthews. Isn't that what proms are really about?—**Joey Odulio**

"Somebody" by Depeche Mode. It brings back good high-school memories.—**Cold Blooded Deadfish B--ch**

"King and Queen of Hearts," because it's the cheesiest song ever!—**Jorel Corpus, 21**

"King and Queen of Hearts" and "The First Time I Love Forever"—**Sib**

"King and Queen of Hearts" is the first that comes to mind. *Pero* yuck. *Kilig nung* high school *pero hindi na ngayon. Tumatalino talaga pag tumatanda.*—**Shahani Gania, 22**

"King and Queen of Hearts." Obvious *ba?!*—**Kitchie Nadal, 22**

"King and Queen of Hearts." Duh.—**Tim Cacho (who wants to date a high school prom queen)**

Although I've grown to hate hearing it because of constant prom play, "King and Queen of Hearts" would have to be my ultimate prom song.—**Gelo Comsti, 23**

Any song will do for me, as long as it's not too cheesy, it doesn't have that trademark nausea-inducing sweetness and it doesn't include the words "king and queen."—**Libby, 20**

"Cupid" by 112—**Pam**

"I Remember You" by Skidrow—**Pancho Araneta, 20**

Anything '80s! I'd like to hear Berlin's "Take My Breath Away," Klymaxx's "I Miss You"... that or a whole lot of Juliana Theory so people will cry! Ha ha!—**"No More Soulmate for Me," 18**

Got more songs in mind? E-mail the author at volcanogirl28@hotmail.com

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LIFESTYLE

2bU! to be young, to be you, to be you! To be you!

Prom *fashion* high priestesses

Two college sophomores turn high school ducklings into swans on prom night

DESIGNERS Alison Dy (left) and Gladi Echavarre pose with their dresses

By Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

WHAT started out as a hobby, sketching prom dress designs for friends in high school, has become a promising business venture.

Ali&Gladi, as the venture is now called, is named after Alison Dy and Gladi Echavarre, AB-Fashion Design and Merchandising sophomores at the De La Salle University-College of St. Benilde (DLSU-CSB). The pair now makes all kinds of formal wear, but prom dresses remain its forté.

"We chose prom dresses because we love making princesses out of our clients. We've been through the prom and it's the first time a girl gets the chance to really dress up before her debut or wedding," Dy points out. "Proms should be unforgettable and we want to (contribute to making it so) with a dress worth remembering."

But since the two are still students, they have to juggle school and work. To cope, they have had to divide the tasks. While both design, Dy usually meets with clients and is in charge of the financial aspects of the business. Echavarre, on the other hand, takes care of fabrics and other materials.

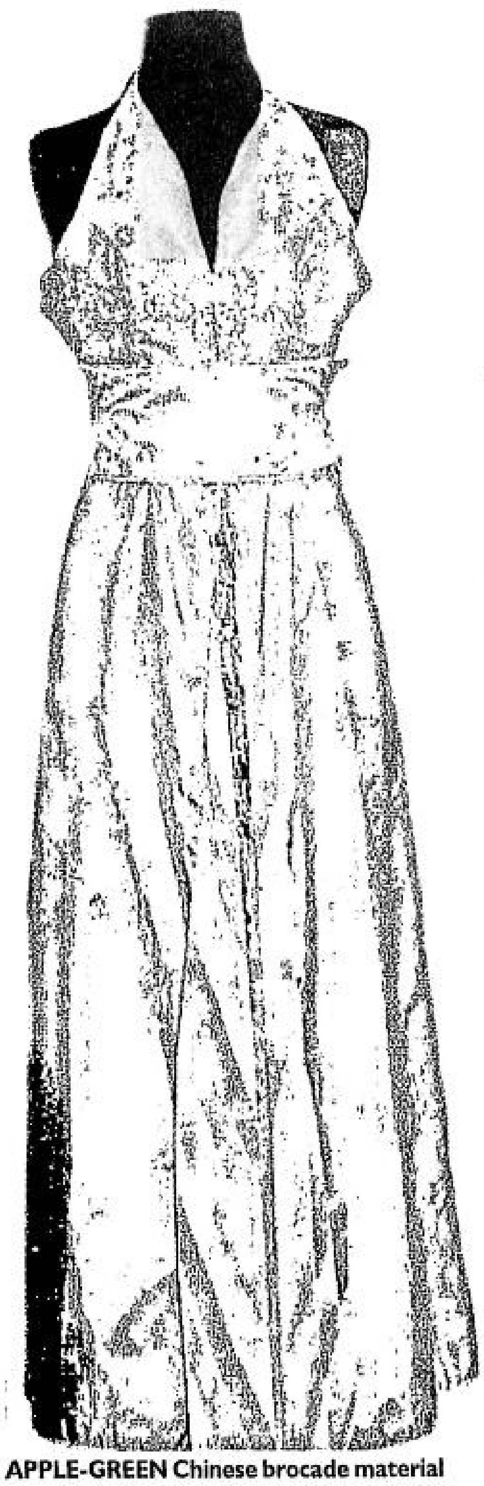
The pair has a seamstress who does the sewing. The two would then do the beadwork and other finishing touches.

Budget conscious

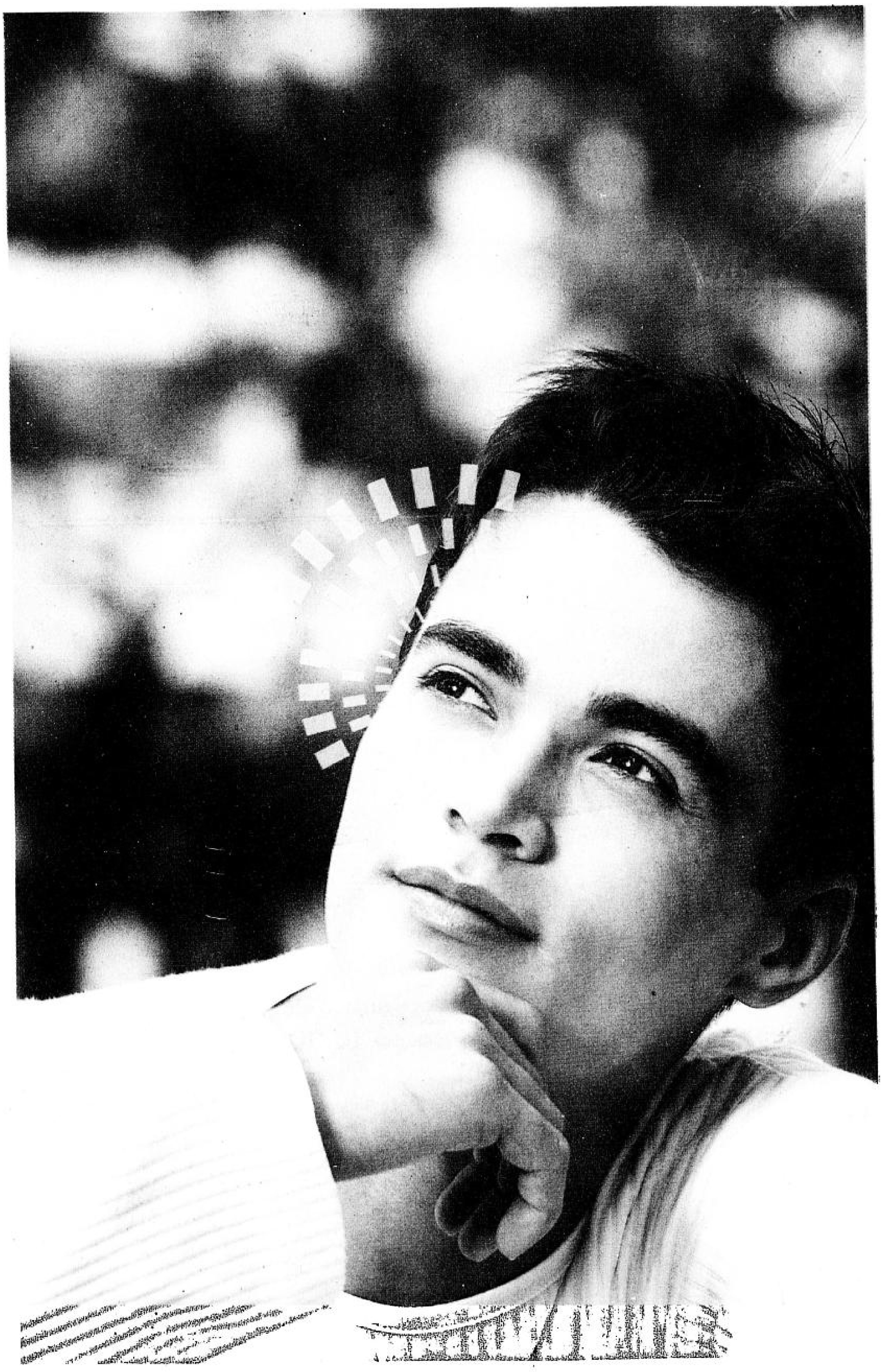
"The nice thing about our business is that the customers name the price. We make the dresses according to their budgets, so mothers don't get shocked when they receive the bills. We make sure the fabrics, embellishments and the labor costs all fit in the budget," Dy adds. "Working on a budget really makes us resourceful because we have to find chic yet pocket-friendly materials."

The pair loves to work on silk-blended fabrics. They usually avoid satin because it has become increasingly common. "When people think of the prom, they [immediately] think of staple pastel colors, balloon skirts and ruffles. As much as possible we do away with that (although we get) our clients' inputs," Echavarre explains. "Our designs are creative without being impractical; edgy but very wearable. But, of course, we never design anything without asking our clients what they really want."

PROM/F2



APPLE-GREEN Chinese brocade material with green tafetta skirt and printed chiffon, P3,000



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Tony Galvez shows the way to shiny, straight hair

THERE'S a new hair craze that is taking the metro by storm. More and more Filipinos are trying out Japan's latest technology in hair straightening known as hair rebonding. With this new hair straightening method, girls who used to be cursed with curly-frizzy hair can now have soft, shiny, smooth and natural-looking straight hair.

Renowned hair expert, Tony Galvez, is one of the pioneering figures in today's rebonding scene. After training in Japan, Galvez introduced hair rebonding along with a superior rebonding chemical called Narcisse TG-10.

Narcisse TG-10 is not only a rebonding chemical but it is also friendly to any type of hair. It can even be used on colored treated hair and can be applied overtime with no worry of hair damage. Narcisse TG-10 is a product of Iriya Chemical Co., Ltd., a leading cosmetics manufacturer in Japan.

This rebonding system can make even the frizziest, most bristly, curly and stand-stiff hair into beautiful silky tresses.

Rebonding, according to Galvez, is quite expensive. Internationally, the price of hair rebonding ranges from $200 to $500 (roughly P10,000-P25,000). Locally, a reliable rebonding treatment costs from P5,000 and up.

Rebonding involves thermolysis, where the hair's chemical bonds will be broken down, rearranged and bonded back permanently. It is a tedious process that requires expertise and care. Salons offering this service must be complete with the necessary facilities, chemicals and trained staff.

The Tony Galvez salon is located at the ground floor of Tony Galvez Centrum, 124 9th Ave., Araneta Center, Cubao, QC. Call 911-6991 or 912-5930.

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It also offers a collagen facial cleansing treatment, a one-and-a-half-hour treatment that guarantees a revitalized beautiful skin.

The salon also boasts of its award-winning hairstylists: Nikki Bacay, who was awarded the Hairdresser of the Year 2000; Miles David, member of the Most Creative Team; and John Magno, who won the Best Haircut for the men's division in the 2002 Schwarzkopf competition.

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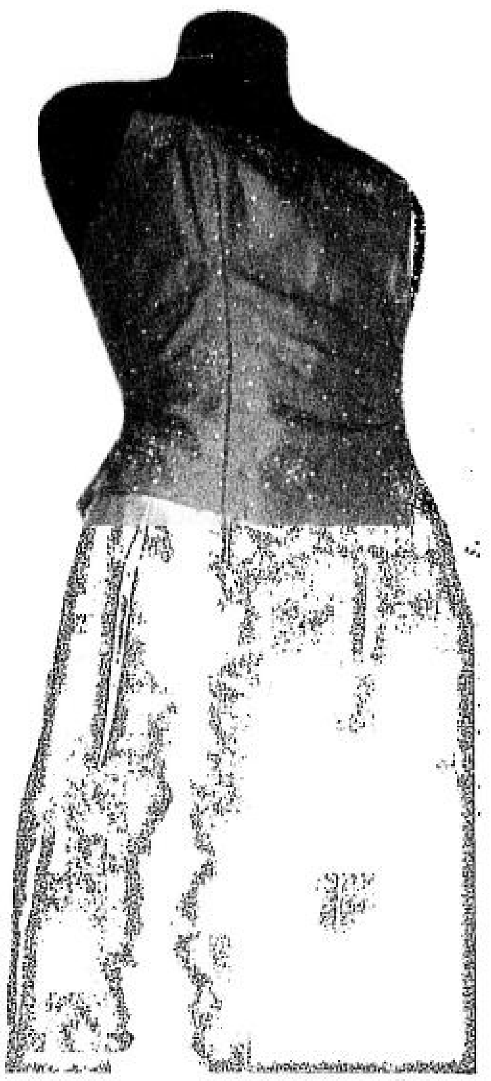
Avail of its 30-50 percent discount on all services on Feb. 19-21. Call 637-6491-92



IRIDESCENT fuchsia and tangerine silk shantung embellished with cut glass beads, P4,000

Prom . . .

From page F1

Dy and Echavarre say everything can be a source of inspiration for them. They are currently particularly inspired by "orientalia" (Asian-inspired themes) and "red carpeters" (celebrities that walk down the red carpet during award ceremonies).

And despite their hectic schedule, they are motivated to keep going. "Our clients inspire us—when we see how excited they are to be princesses for a night. They make us even more eager to design. And at the same time, the money we earn continues to drive us—there's nothing like spending hard-earned money; there's a sense of fulfillment and security there."

By appointment

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A budget of about P2,500 is the minimum. The pair also offers package deals, (i.e. two tops and one skirt or one top with two skirts) for mixing and matching.

Ali&Gladi normally delivers, although occasionally clients may have to pick up their dresses, if either of the two is unavailable for delivery.

Although business is brisk, Dy and Echavarre's ultimate dream is to study at Central St. Martins in London, and set up a bigger business afterwards. For now, they are determined to make their mark in the market. "What makes us different from other designers is that we're young—we belong to the same age bracket as our clients. That gives us an understanding (of) what they really want."

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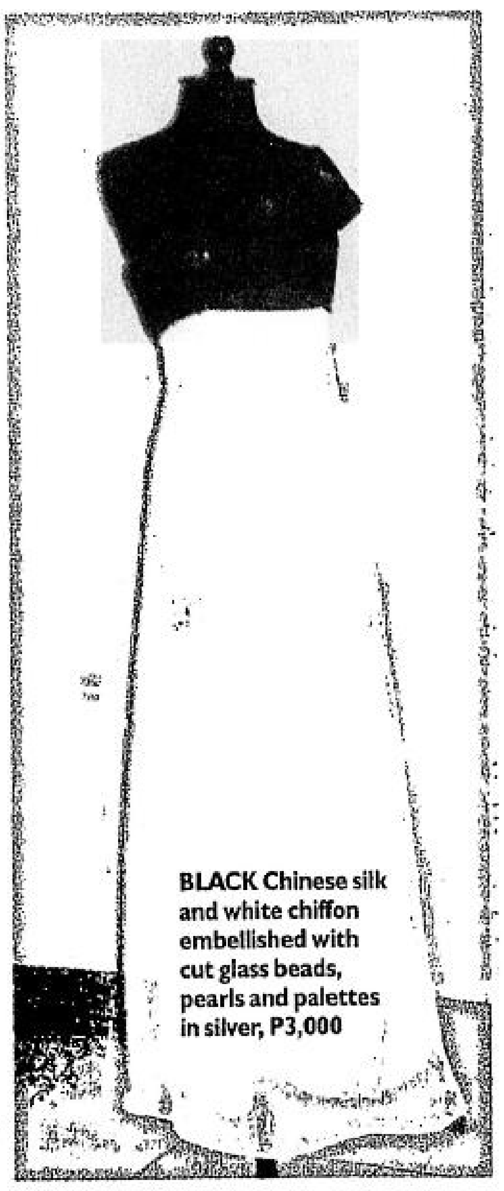
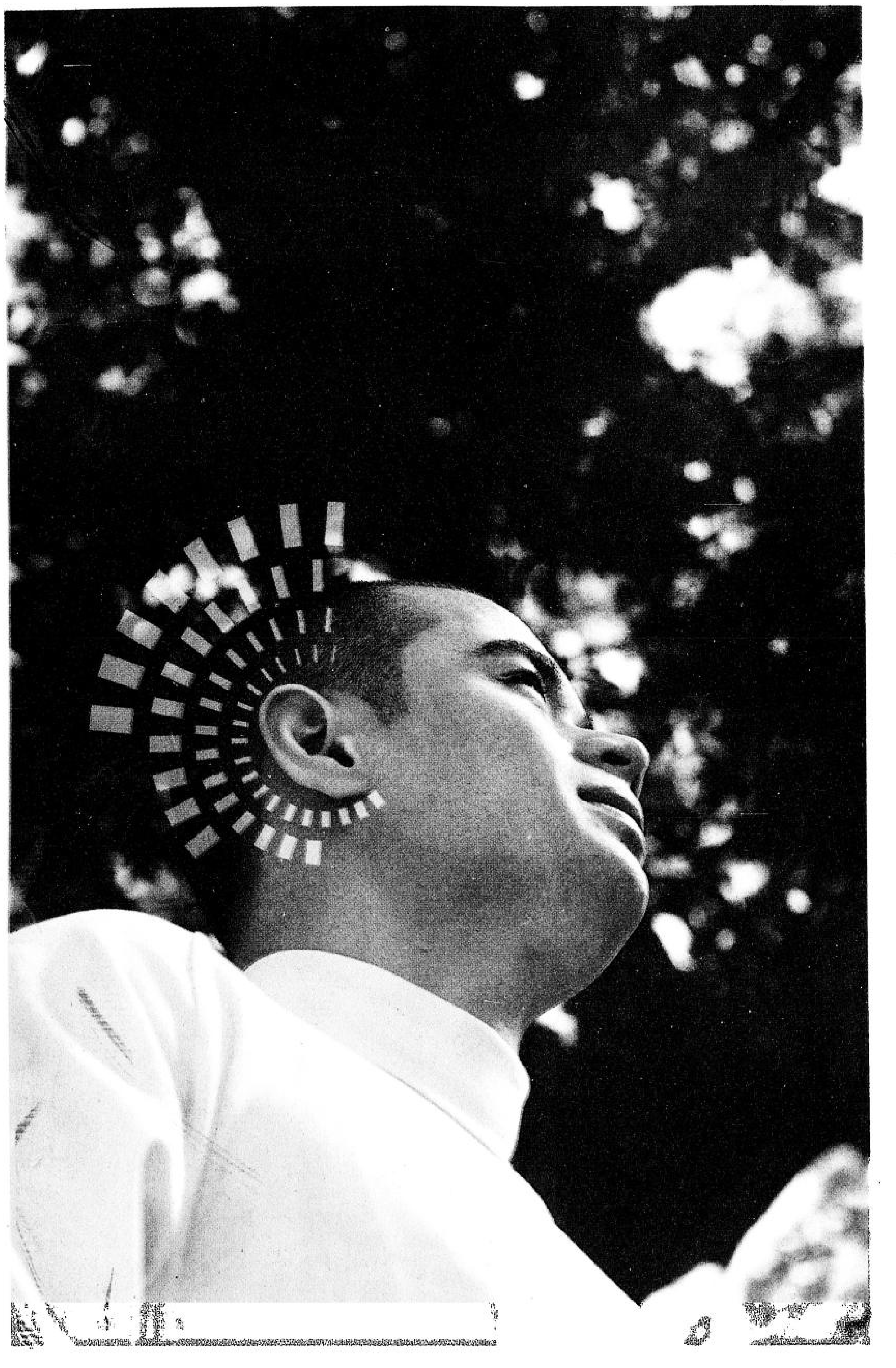


BLACK Chinese silk and white chiffon embellished with cut glass beads, pearls and palettes in silver, P3,000



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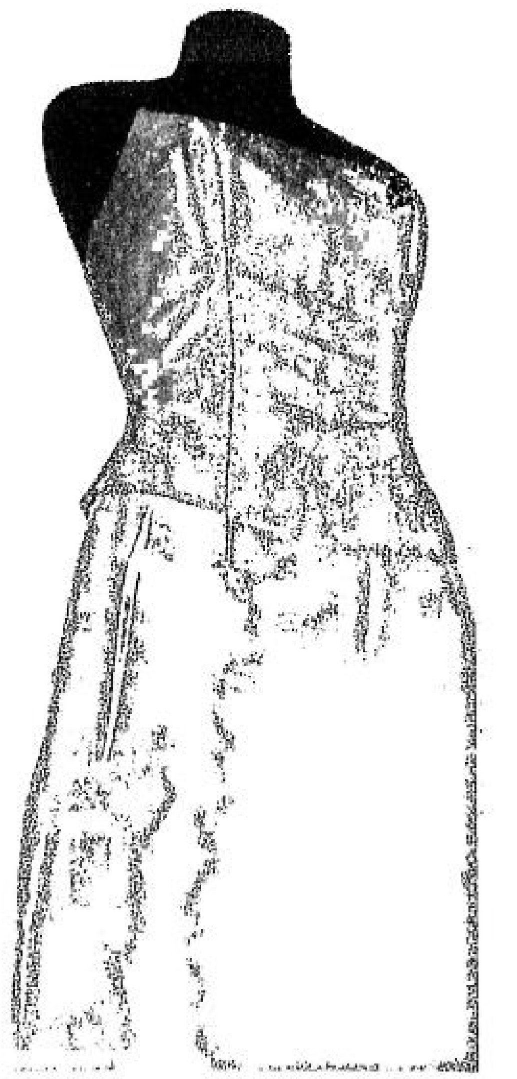

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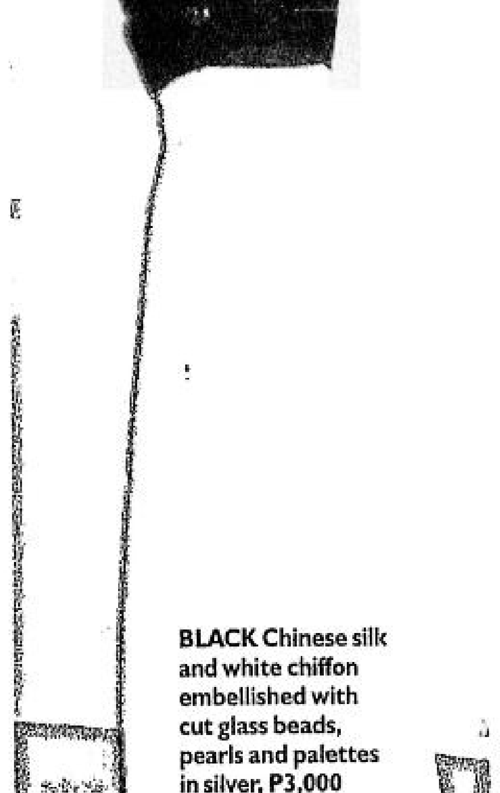

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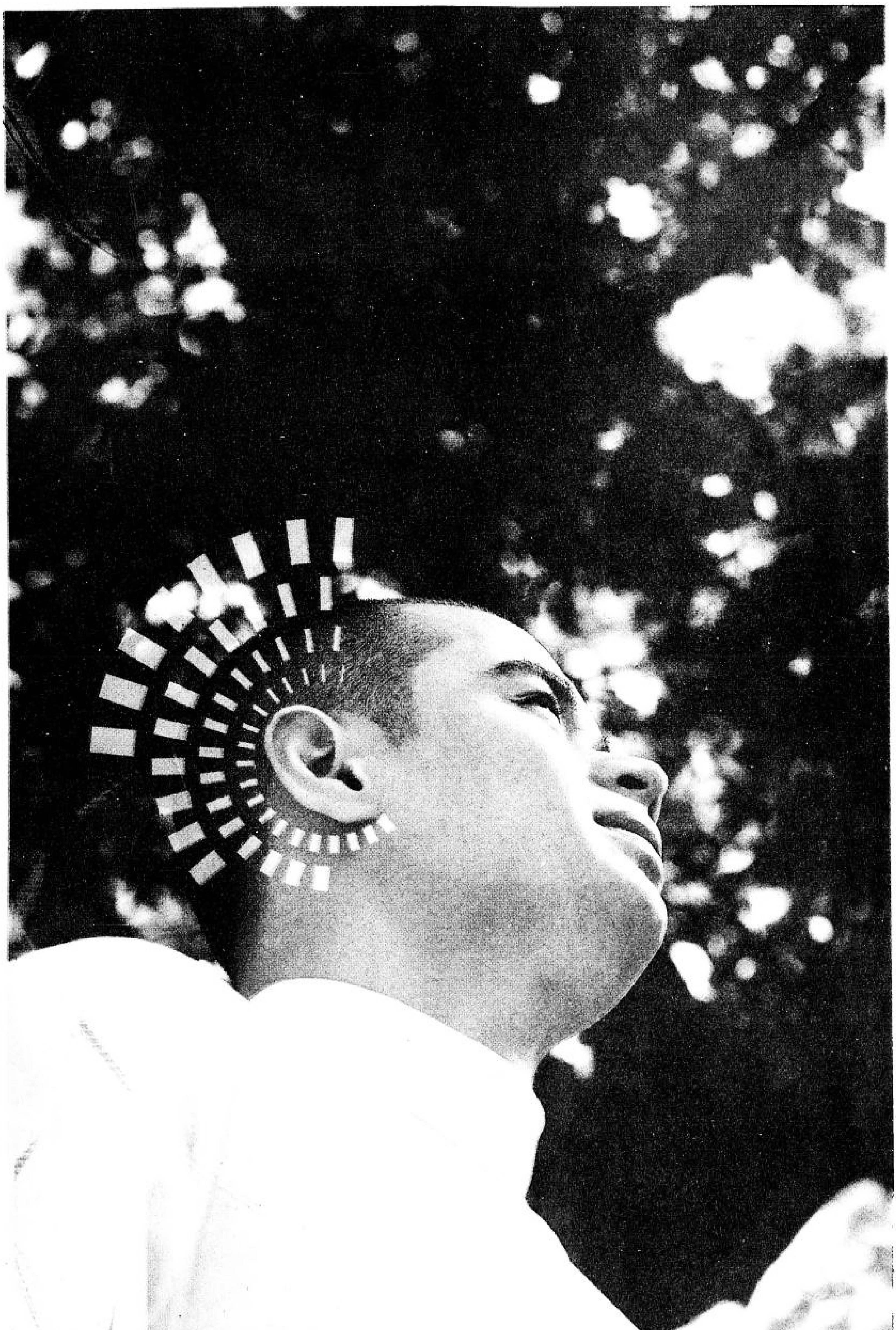

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Prom nightmares

By Bunny Anne Gapit
2bU! Correspondent

FORGET about strapless bras that fall to the waistline, heels that break as in the Mentos ad or cars that conk out. There are worse real-life prom horror stories.

Backstage blooper

Minutes before the prom started, Dani, a cute junior, and Ramil, a bubbly gay senior, who were going to be emcees, were rehearsing backstage. Colette, a popular senior campus beauty who was doing the invocation, joined the duo.

Dressed in the height of fashion (her long hair in groovy dreadlocks, too), Colette enjoyed all the compliments from Ramil until he suddenly tried to create a wedge between her and her equally popular best friend. "Oh, you should see Lucy tonight, super dooper pretty, too!" Ramil exclaimed. Colette responded by asking, "Do you know where she had her makeup done? At Bong Bactad's." Her tone was derisive as she mentioned the salon nearby.

"Oh, why where did you have yours?" Ramil continued. "James Cooper's," Colette proudly announced. "Honey, you sure are the winner!" Ramil boosted her ego. As Dani prepared to leave, what Ramil said next caught her attention. "So, have you seen Darius already? Did he ask you to save him a dance?" Darius was Dani's tall and charming classmate, who was rumored to have courted Colette. "Nah," Collette frowned, "he's got a midget girlfriend now. What disgusting taste! What a real flirt. I just wanna smack her!"

Dani felt bad as Darius' girlfriend was Maribeth, her best friend, who just then showed up backstage to wish her good luck. "Hi Colette! You're lovely," Maribeth was all praises. The two seniors froze where they stood while Dani sneered.

Some prom nights are almost as bad as the horror movie 'Carrie'

Near-murder on the dance floor

So he would not flunk in the finals, Coby agreed to dance the "Swing" on prom night to be exempted from taking several examinations. He never thought rehearsal would be dreadful.

During practice, Lana, his partner, would act like his smell was offensive whenever he raised his arms.

She would even pretend to faint in the middle of a dance, making Lana's friends in the crowd laugh. Coby also knew that after practice, she still badmouthed him as if she hadn't embarrassed him enough.

Even on prom night, Lana repeated her antics that Coby was beside himself with rage. This time, he gripped her hands painfully, twisting them so hard she was in danger of spraining her wrists, and pushed and pulled her harshly. Lana could not prevent yelping in pain every now and then. She snapped at him but he ignored her. At the end of the dance, Lana was so exhausted she could no longer return to the dance floor.

Crowning folly

Prom night started beautifully for Mary Ann Santos. She was looking really nice in her gown and she was escorted by her major crush. Then she heard her name announced as Prom Queen!

Things became blurred after that. Familiar faces blocked her way to congratulate her as she walked to the stage. When she got there, another joyous girl also got on stage so she traded kisses with her, thinking it was a tie.

But she wondered why she wasn't getting her crown until she saw her best friend in the crowd making a letter C with her hand. The prom queen was actually Mary Ann Santos of section C, not Mary Ann Santos from A.

Explosive number

Marie was excited at the thought of singing a duet with the campus hottie, Richard, during prom night. She was thinking that if they did well, they'd shine enough to be considered the prom's best pair.

Richard was a little distressed to learn she opted for "One Sweet Day" of Boyz II Men and Mariah Carey, instead of the more relaxed and "safer" notes of "Everyday" by Agot Isidro.

Then came her most awaited moment. With the spotlights trained on them, Marie and Richard did their number. The crowd looked impressed. But at one point, a high note got the better of Marie that she let out a gaseous burst. The audience might not have heard the non-melodic sound but Richard certainly did not miss it. He could not hold his laughter even as they continued with their song.

Marie's face had turned beet red from shame. Her poise completely deserted her that she and Richard totally bungled the rest of the song.

Shaky baby

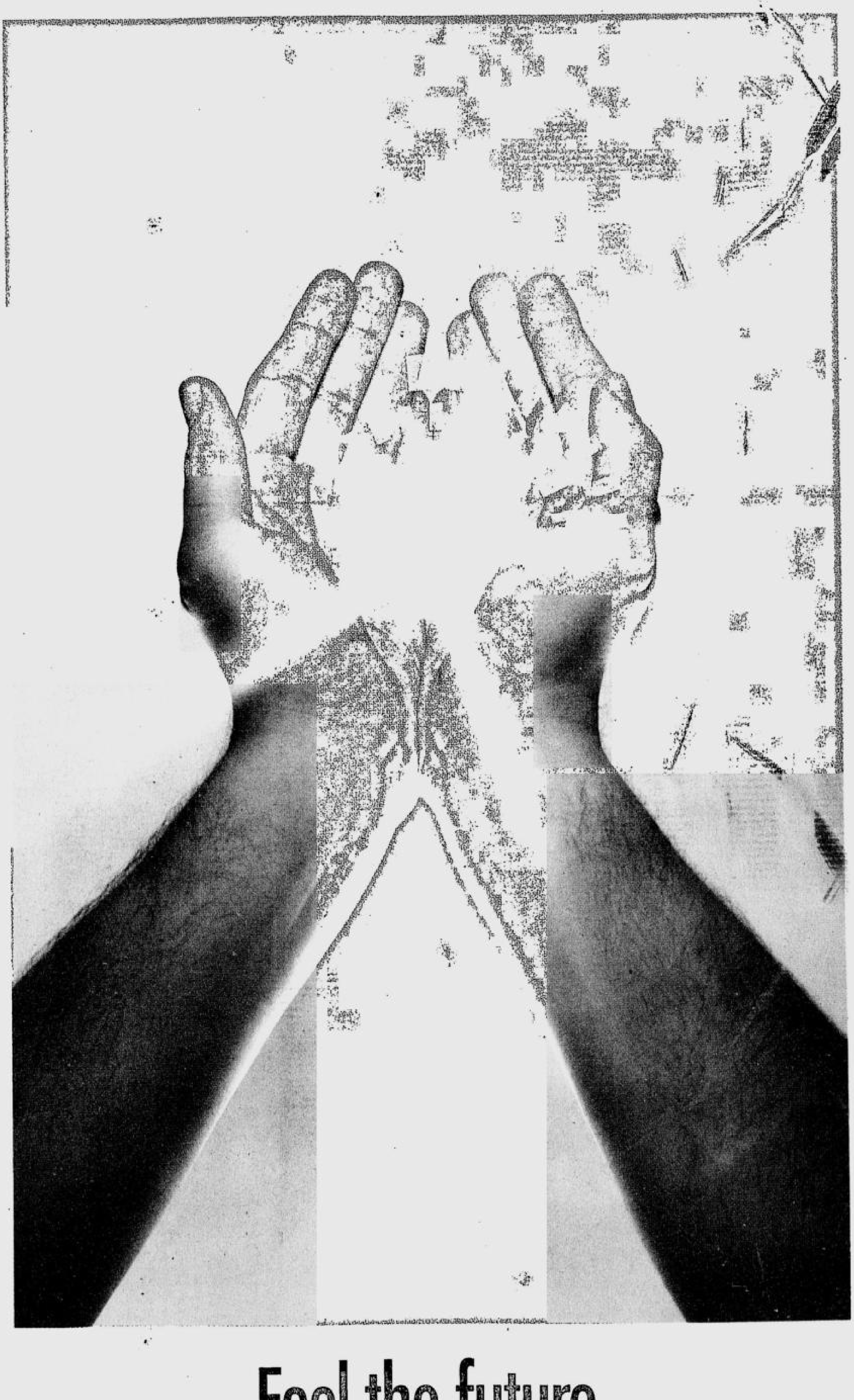
While everybody was dancing, Ryan noticed a lonely girl at a table. Ryan politely asked her to dance but the girl declined. He persisted until she accepted.

The girl was bashful and could hardly groove to the music. Ryan was a total mixer, dancing with several girls at the same time. Suddenly, he heard the girl yell and saw her almost fall flat on her face had he not been able to catch her.

He felt the girl shaking. When he turned around, she was looking like a mess, spit dripping from her mouth. Shocked, Ryan dragged her along, getting help from others. The girl was briefly unconscious. When she woke up, she could hardly remember the seizure, to Ryan's surprise.

HA
HA
HA
StephB

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO



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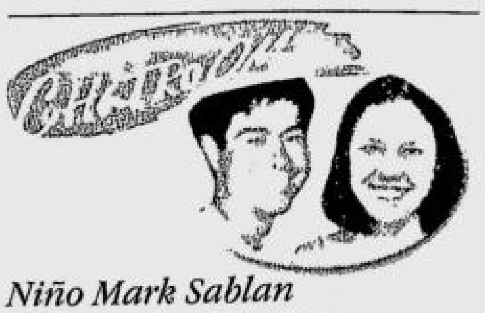
Jilted professor continues to court his student



Niño Mark Sablan
& September Mahino

DEAR September and Mark,

I am a senior college student and one of my teachers is courting me. I already told him that I don't want a romantic relationship with a teacher and that we're better off as friends. But he still calls me at home and sends me text messages. He also accompanies me whenever I go home.

My parents and friends don't like him. But, I just can't break his heart because he is genuinely nice to me. I recently found out that his fellow teachers already know about his feelings for me, and they're blaming me for his ineptitude at work.

How will I turn down my professor whom I have already turned down before?

CHERRY

You need a change in perspective. That nice professor of yours is doing more than simply courting you. You have to realize that he's already harassing you and there is no nice way of telling him to stop.

Your professor, of all people, should know that a teacher-student relationship is, under any circumstance, inexcusable because of the power differences between the two. For one, he is a grownup. Two, he's a man, considerably physically stronger than you are. And third, he can use your grades to control and manipulate you. Any adult who doesn't realize the wrongness of a male teacher-female student relationship is already suspect, so don't worry too much about doing the nice and correct way of turning your professor down. I'm sure, he knows what he is doing and he knows how much control he can wield over you.

Once you've stopped feeling sorry for your professor/manipulator, you can now have the courage to approach the right people who can put a stop to his harassment. Your school administrators can provide you with the biggest help and they can effectively prevent your professor from continuing his advancements. Don't be too worried about the accusations of other teachers. It wasn't you who stepped over the bounds, anyway.

SEP

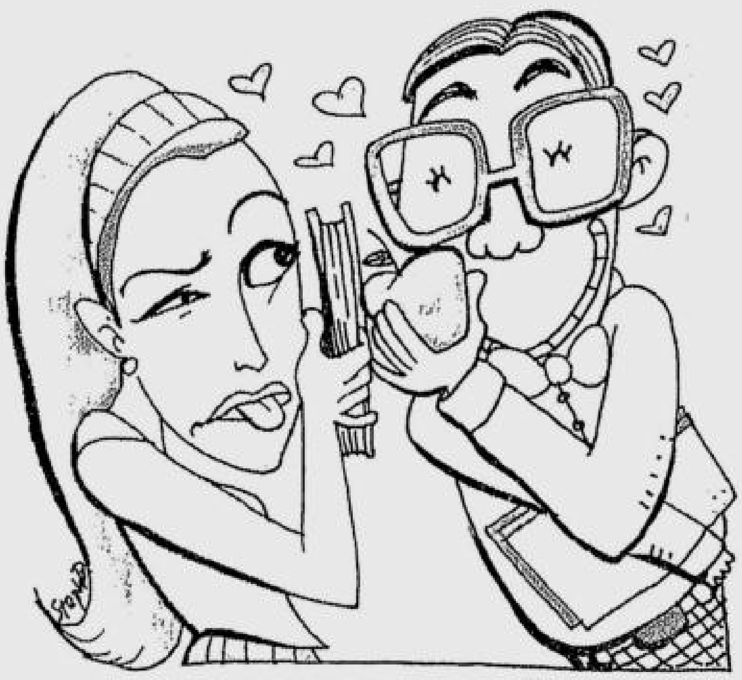


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Assuming he's older, nothing is really wrong with May-December love affairs as long as the love is there. But considering your suitor's occupation and present position in your life, decisions should be made with the setting and the other people around in mind.

Since you did just that, I shake your hand for being honest, fair to yourself and not so harsh in putting him down.

Having turned him down and specifically expressed your intentions, it is no longer your fault if he continues a futile pursuit to win your heart. No one should also hold you responsible for your teacher's ineptitude in the workplace or shortcomings to his colleagues. You just have to prove to everyone that you are not to blame for such things.

If you really want to emphasize your point and put an end to the latest university gossip, you better answer less phone calls from your prof (I assume only a 10th is semi-important and school-related) and settle for the cutesy-wootsie graphic text messages you can forward to your friends. And speaking of friends, spend more quality time with them and use them as your valid reason when rejecting your teacher's invitations and offers. Letting him accompany you on your way home just intensifies the little hope he has, plus it becomes firewood to all the nasty rumors in school.

If he genuinely cares for you, your prof should understand that you don't want to hurt him. He should get the point and respect your decisions. But if he doesn't, it just goes to show that your teacher has genuinely great intentions—for himself.

Now if he flunks you or starts spreading lies about you seducing him, that's definitely a huge problem.

But that's for another column.

MARK

San Beda honors Ben Farrales' 50 years in fashion

BEN Farrales, an alumnus of San Beda and one of the most revered designers in the country, will receive the Bedan of the Century award to be given by the San Beda College Alumni Association (SBCAA) at the annual Red and White Ball to be held on Feb. 20 at the NBC Tent of the Bonifacio Global City.

Farrales recently celebrated his 50th year in fashion with a show at the Makati Shangri-La Ballroom. Since then, the designer has received countless invitations for a restaging of the collection.

On Feb. 20, he will present select pieces from his collection. The event, titled "The Golden Collection of Ben Farrales," is a testament of this fashion icon's commitment to the highest ideals of elegance, excellent craftsmanship and originality.

Aside from Farrales, other awardees include Rep. Oscar Moreno, who will receive the Mitra Award for Legislation, and other outstanding Bedans and celebrated Bedan sports heroes who will be made part of the San Beda Sports Hall of Fame.

Produced by NBC, The Red and White Ball, which is the customary prelude to the annual grand alumni homecoming, will be participated in by prominent Bedans led by Manny V. Pangilinan, who will be hosting the event. The trophies to be given that evening are designed by another Bedan, stylist Rachy Cuna.

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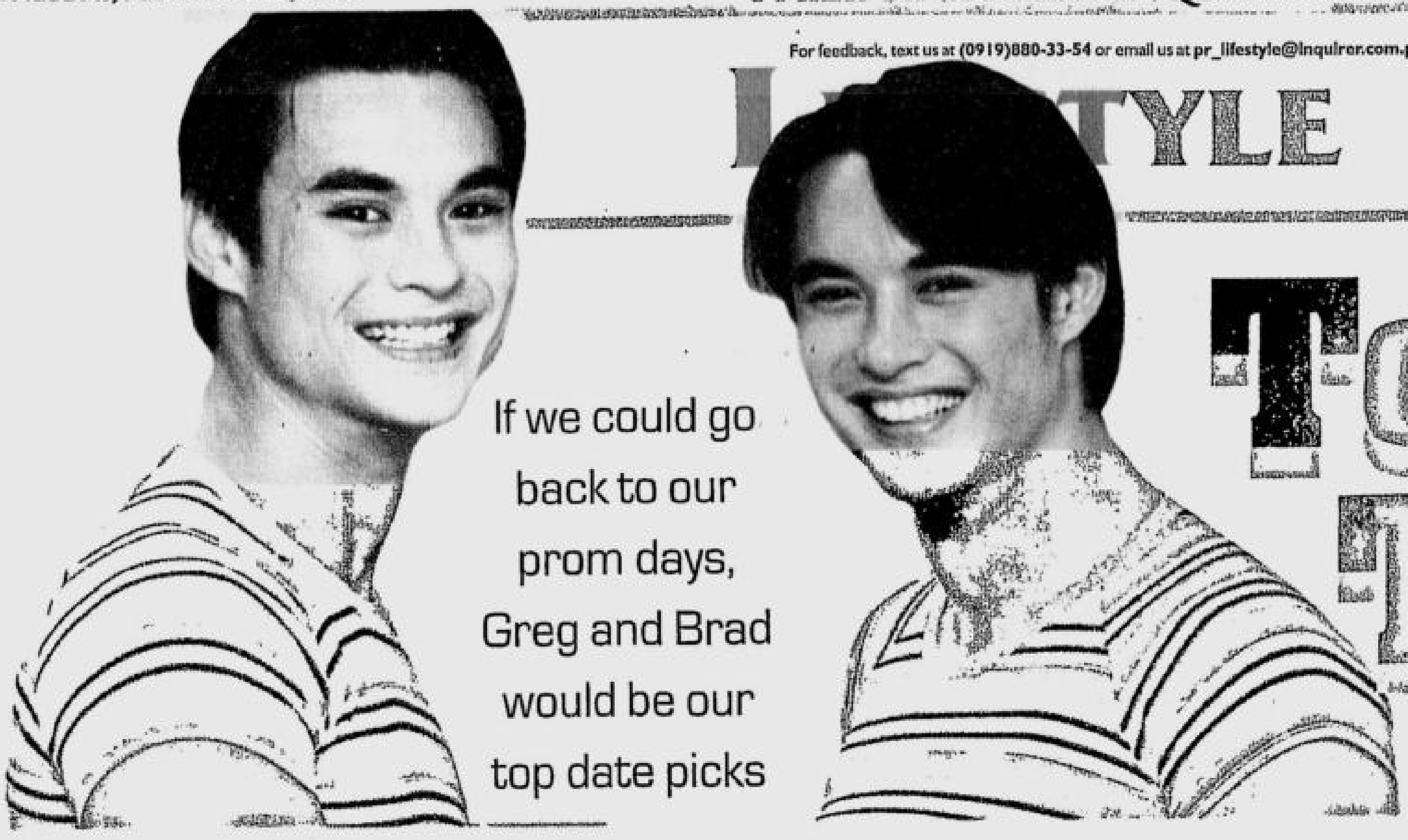
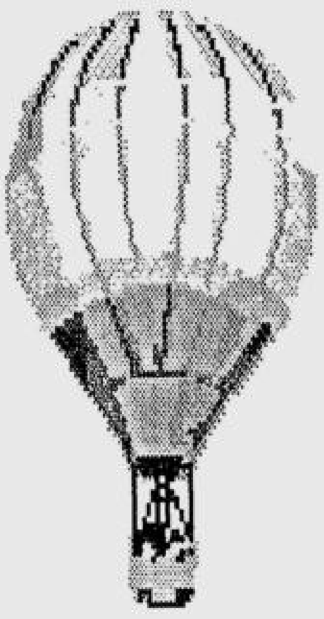


Topsy Turvey

If we could go back to our prom days, Greg and Brad would be our top date picks

Story on page G2



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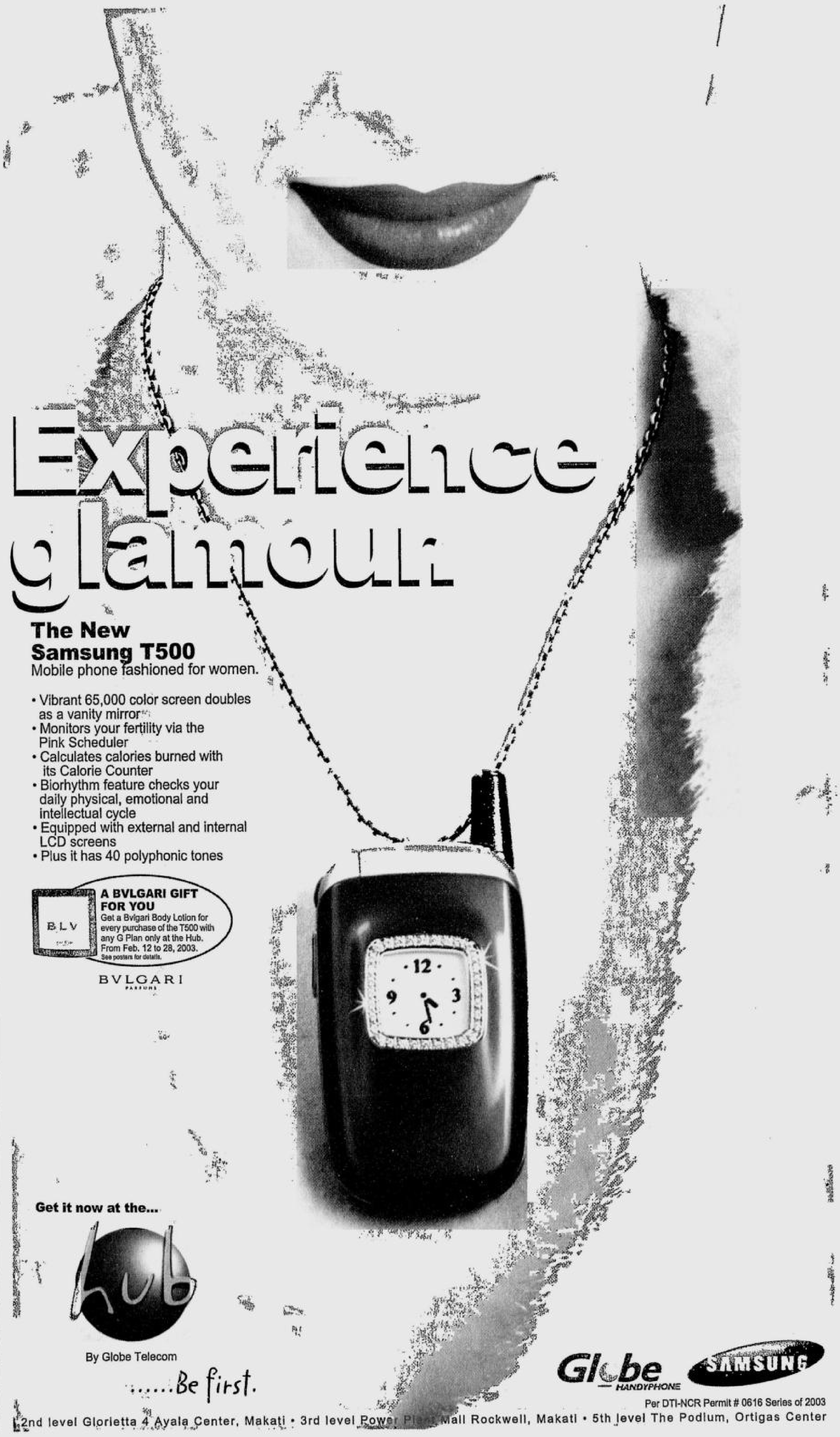

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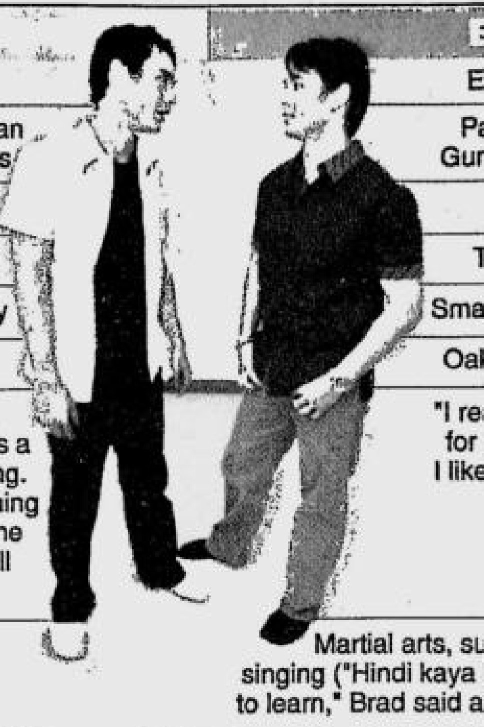
Topsy Turvey

Text by Pam Pastor
Photos by Mike Alquinto

Just how different are the Turvey twins? Read on.



	GREG	BRAD
Favorite type of music	Everything	Everything
Favorite song	Working Class Man by Jimmy Barnes	Patience by Guns N' Roces
Favorite food	Seafood	Curry
Favorite movie	Heat	The Crow
Favorite TV show	Home and Away	Smallville & UFC
Favorite Article of clothing	Boxer briefs	Oakley shades
Ideal Girl	"I don't have a particular type. It's a total package thing. As long as everything looks like it's in the right place it's all good."	"I really really go for personality. I like sweet girls"
Passions	Mind games	Martial arts, surfing & singing ("Hindi kaya ko but I'd like to learn," Brad said about singing.)

INQGRAPHICS: ERNIE SAMBO

AT first glance, they looked exactly alike. So alike that you had to ask, "How do people tell you apart?"

The reply was quick. "Tell him to drop his pants and you'd know," one of them answered.

Then they tried to pull a fast one. "I'm Greg, he's Brad," said the one who looks more like Brad.

No, you say. You don't think so. And you were right.

The twins admitted that they have tried pretending to be each other in the past. "But it never worked!" they said. You're not surprised. Because when you look closely, you can see that they're not identical. Greg's features are strong, Brad's are soft. Brad speaks more readily while Greg likes mulling over the questions before talking. They are not blind to their differences, too. "Bad boy," Brad said, pointing at Greg. Greg replied with the same nonchalance, his finger pointed at Brad, "Boy next door."

Twins Bradley and Gregory Turvey were born within two minutes of each other in Australia to a Chinese mom and a Scottish-Australian dad.

Childhood

The two talked about their favorite childhood memories (Brad: "Getting nearly drowned by our Rottweiler when I was 10." Greg: "Going crabbing with the whole family") and what it was like to grow up in Australia with each other. Since they didn't have any other siblings, it was no surprise that the two are very close to each other. Brad spoke, "I can't imagine not having him." Not to say though that the two didn't have crazy moments. In fact, when asked about the worst thing they did to each other, the answers bordered on the shocking.

"When I was 16, we were fighting and he put my head through a plaster wall," Brad said.

"He broke two of my ribs," Greg countered.

CAN you tell who's who?

Brad evidently felt the need to explain. "I made a vow when we were 12 that I'd never lay a hand on him but he took that to his advantage and beat me up all the time. One time, I thought, enough is enough. He broke his knuckle on my head and I broke two of his ribs."

That's what you get for having two martial arts black belters in one household.

Martial arts

When Brad and Greg were young, they used to watch really old wrestling and Bruce Lee movies. "Our parents wanted us to learn martial arts. It was our way of connecting with our Asian heritage because we weren't living there."

The lessons have paid off. "Greg is the International Kickboxing Federation Australian Lightweight Champion of 2000-2001," Brad said, his words dripping with pride.

And Greg has put his skills to good use. Brad said, "I got into a fight with a guy. This guy had five friends with him. My other friends were up the road and couldn't get there on time to help me. Greg came running up the street, crashed his way through five other guys, grabbed the guy who was fighting with me, picked him up and threw him on the ground." This, according to Brad, is the best thing his brother has done for him.

And the best thing Brad has done for Greg? "Being my brother," he answered simply.

"We argue but it's forgotten after 10 minutes. We're super close that's why we get *sungit* with each other," Brad said.

Brad described Greg as "very shy, super shy, has a very strong personality, very stubborn and has a very short fuse."

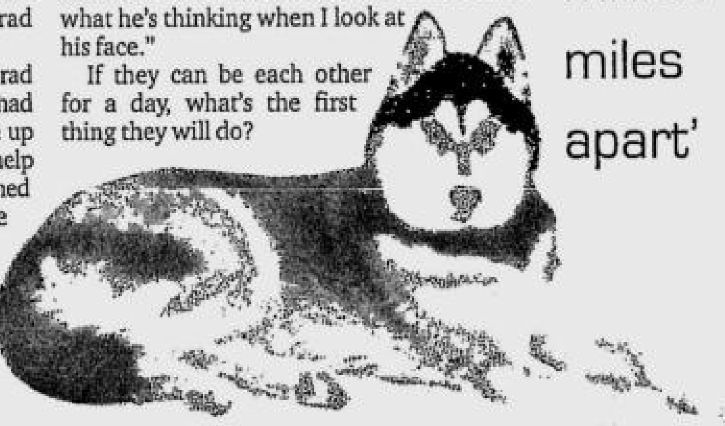
Greg said that Brad is "a boy next door, super patient, placid, boring, no, no, he's not boring. He's… frighteningly normal."

They may look alike but the two are as different as night and day in some aspects. "In the things we are similar in, we are identical. But in the things we are different in, we are really at opposite extremes," Greg said.

Brad nodded in agreement. "We are either totally alike or a million miles apart."

> 'We are either totally alike or a million miles apart'

"We have the same thoughts, we talk the same and have the same mannerisms. I know what he's thinking when I look at his face."



REIKO, Brad's hot dog

If they can be each other for a day, what's the first thing they will do?

MIRROR image

"I'd piss someone off. He never does that," Greg said.

Brad, living up to his boy-next-door image said, "I'd make some friends, be nice to people and come out of my shell."

Twins in Manila

Brad first came to Manila in October 2001 to visit his friends who were modeling here. "I fell in love with the place, with the people and came back in February."

Greg followed a year later, around November. "He didn't have someone to bash so he followed me here," Brad said, smiling.

"No," Greg corrected his brother. "I needed to get away from Australia."

Manila has opened a truckload of opportunities for the two. The two have abandoned their previous careers in real estate, retail, security and management.

Brad has been busy with commercials, events hosting and TV guestings. Just last week, he started working with RX 93.1's Chico and Delamar in their morning show "Morning Rush." He said of all the things he's done so far, his radio stint is the one he has enjoyed the most. "It's incredible—it's the best. I love it. Chico and Delamar are so good to work with. They make my job so much easier."

Greg, although new to acting, is a mainstay in GMA 7's "Kahit Kailan."

But these opportunities aren't the only reason they have for staying here. Brad said the best thing about being in Manila is "making new friends" while Greg likes it for "the different lifestyle." They say they can do without the traffic, cab drivers and everything constantly running late.

The two sprinkle a little Tagalog in their sentences. "I just started taking lessons last week," said Brad.

Greg said, "I'm learning on my own."

Although they have found a temporary home in Manila, Brad and Greg miss a lot of things about Australia.

"The ocean because I love fishing," Brad said. "And my dog Reiko." Reiko is a three-year-old Siberian Husky whom Brad refers to as his baby.

Greg says he misses "the surf."

How long will the Turvey twins stay in Manila?

"It's indefinite," Brad said. "As long as I have a reason to stay."

Greg added, "As long as there's work. As long as it's still fun. When the fun goes, so do I."

That's good enough for us.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

Shall we dance?

By Franco Cruz Mabanta
2bU! Correspondent

A young man offers unsolicited advice on how ladies can have a grand time at the prom

YOU have to excuse 2bU! for choosing a dating amateur to advise girls on what guys expect from them at the prom. Please keep in mind that if you read anything here along the lines of, "Ladies, if you have hair on your chin, then you must shave," the newspaper is not responsible. After all, as I mentioned in previous articles elsewhere, you're reading an article written by a boy who's only trying to be a dating guru. And sometimes alcohol can be an excuse for your mistakes. Here we go.

Weeks before the big night, girls spend hours on end picking what, in their eyes, is the perfect dress. If your intent is to wow your man and take his breath away at first glance, then "simple and standard" is the safest way to go. I'm not referring to a housedress and a feather duster. Come as elegant and glamorous as you can without trying too hard to be creative and "fashionable." Many times have I seen young girls who recreate their dresses for proms in an attempt to come up with memorable fashion statements. Of course, it's a hit-and-miss sort of situation. But, sometimes, the results are either walking peacocks or Christmas trees 10 months too early. We all know that every lady wants to look like a flawless, dreamy princess at the prom, but please—for your sake—do your best to look like a flawless, dreamy princess from earth. It's smart to copy dresses from gowns that foreign celebrities wear to events like the Oscars or the Grammy's, as long as you can pull them off. But if you're simply attending just for the fun of it, then you have the license to tie a rooster to your thigh.

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Enjoy the night

Secondly, when it comes to choosing your date, go for a good conversationalist who'll make you think or a decent comic who'll make you laugh rather than a moron with washboard abs or a blonde dufus. Having a good-looking moron for a date will only spell a boring evening. Go with somebody you're very comfortable with and who can be patient with you even if you talk too much about Britney Spears or Pokemon. I guarantee that, the following Monday, you'll be able to call yourself one of the few who went to the prom and actually enjoyed it.

Distance

Let's not forget that there's always the issue of distance. If you live in Antipolo and your man stays in Alabang, then there's a problem.

Usually, if your date's your boyfriend, he won't mind picking you up even if you live in Indonesia. But for the unlucky majority who'll be taking non-partners, consideration—like meeting him half way— will be very much appreciated.

Prom magic

Lastly, the usual prom killer is excessive expectation. Any college student will tell you that the prom magic found in Hollywood teen movies practically never happens in real life. The more you expect to get swept off your feet, the deeper you'll sink into disappointment. Bear in mind that all the hype of prom night is fabricated by greedy flower vendors. And if you play their game, you'll wake up the next day asking yourself why you thought that way. If you view it as a simple affair, you'll have more fun and be more at ease. Seeing it from this perspective gives you a choice as to whether or not you want to enjoy your night. Since you're the one who'll plan the night's post-prom activity, it will be a good change of tradition. And here's where you can play with your creativity. In the end, having a grand time at the prom depends on you. If you want to enjoy your evening, make it happen.

E-mail the author at franx@edsamail.com.ph.

A prom night manual

By Tammy David
2bU! Correspondent

THE JUNIOR-SENIOR Prom is certainly going to be one of the things you will remember most about high school long after you have left school. As in most anything else, however, there are dos and don'ts. Here are some of the don'ts.

> The don'ts are just as important as the dos in making prom night memorable

Be late

Just because you don't get detention passes if you are late on prom night doesn't mean you should be. As much as possible, plan ahead and make sure you have back up plans in case problems arise (traffic, parlor snafus etc.). If you really want a grand entrance, then get a good-looking date or a great outfit.

Starve yourself

A big part of the prom fee goes to food but that does not mean you should fast before prom night. Try to eat a little so you won't get hungry and nibble on mints the whole night. But if you choose to be trapped in a corset or a snappy trendy suit, you will have to wait until after the party to eat.

Pick a fight

Never mind if your outfit is exactly the same as someone else's or your ex brought the person he dumped you for. Control yourself. You don't want to embarrass your date or, worse, be remembered as the person who ruined the prom.

Dump your partner

Think of other ways to make the night memorable aside from dropping your partner.

Play "King and Queen of Hearts," "YMCA" and "Asereje"

Do you really have to? Unless you really enjoy these songs and are afraid to break tradition, please ask whoever is in charge of music to avoid playing songs you hear all the time.

Get drunk and wasted

At least, wait until after the party to drown in spirits your frustration for having a terrorist for a date or even if drinking is your definition of "prom fun."

Leave valuables unattended

The ballroom is not the classroom. The last thing you want to do is cry not because you were chosen Prom King or Queen, but because you lost your mobile phone or wallet.

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Girls, in particular, should spend more time and money in the parlor rather than waste so much time retouching in the powder room.

Invest on a good makeup combo. Don't chat with your buds in the restroom. Save your *kuwento* for Monday's lunch break.

As for other inconveniences (monthly period or bum tummy) wear a really good pad or take medication before the party.

Play games on your phone or palm or bring portable gadgets

Keep in mind why you are in the prom.

Campaign to win the crown

Instead of looking desperate, act like you deserve to win.

Check into a room

"American Pie" was just a movie. If you really need some sleep or rest, do it at home.

WHO'S GONNA BE PROM QUEEN? Bianca and Ala in a celebrity match on who will get the crown. Bianca's trench coat by Milkwear, top and skirt by Topshop; Ala's top, scarf and pants, all by Topshop

Pre-& post-prom dressing

Make sure you have everything in your checklist ready as prom day comes close

Text and styling by Dara David
Photos by Ronnie Salvacion

R U I F US? Gentxt endorsers Evan Santos, Ala Paredes, Bianca Gonzalez and Andrei Felix. Evan is in a Topshop shirt and pants and a Milkwear jacket. Ala is wearing a dress and trench by Milkwear. Bianca is in Milkwear jacket, denim ruffled mini by Freeway, camel belt by Milkwear. Andrei is in Milkwear and Topshop.

THE PROM season is upon us! Once again, it will be full of days of wondering about what to wear and who to go with. Not everyone can be prom queen, but since you're dressing up for the event anyway, you might as well try.

To be the queen of the night, make sure you have everything in your checklist ready as the day comes close. Date or no date, the prom season is a time to feel good, look good and be merry.

After the prom, don't carry your ball gowns as you parade yourself in the cafés and malls. Bring more comfortable clothes to change into and paint the town red, blue, or whatever color you wish.

And be prepared for all sorts of things, as stories from former prom goers will tell you.

Ala Paredes, MYX veejay, has this prom memory: "Went to this guy's prom and he was a whole foot shorter than me. Meaning, he had a great view of my breasts, and it was super embarrassing when we danced to a slow tune. Plus, we won the 'Jack and the Beanstalk' award. Then before going onstage, I accidentally spilled water on his pants!"

Bianca Gonzalez, an Ateneo student, had two proms. But her school didn't allow anyone from other institutions to be the students' dates. "My boyfriend at that time was from another school, so I ended up not going to any of the proms!"

"One perceives the prom to be a storybook, picture-perfect night. But in the end, the magic (doesn't come from) what you expect, but what you make of it," said Evan Santos, athlete and *alaskador*, during the shoot.

"During my prom, I was kind of not nervous anymore 'cause I attended a graduation ball already a couple of days before," said Andrei Felix, another Blue Eagle and all-around cool guy. "My date and I won the cutest couple award! It was fun, although my date's mom spoiled the post-prom (for me) 'cause she went to Makati Shang and picked her up, so I went out with my friends without a date."

One way to avert, if not completely avoid some of those "disasters," is to have pre- and post-prom plans, from shopping for knockout outfits, to getting made up at the parlor, de-stressing at the spa, leaving for an out-of-town destination, or going on an after-prom date or just a night out with your best pals. Relax, and have a ball. If you do things right, you might just end up being prom queen.

With a GENTXT card, enjoy a 5-percent discount on items at Topshop; a 10-percent discount on cash and 5 percent on credit purchases, excluding sale items at Freeway; and a 10-percent discount on cash and credit at Milkwear.

DO YOU HAVE IT? Ala is wearing a dress by Milkwear while Andrei's jacket and shirt is by Milkwear, pants by Topshop. Evan's jacket by Milkwear, shirt and pants by Topshop

MESSAGE SENT. Bianca Gonzalez is wearing head to foot Topshop

MAKEUP:
KRIST BANSUELO
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Prom date dos and don'ts

By Kristine Ching
2bU! Correspondent

IF YOU'RE going to be someone's date on prom night, here are ways to help make the event special for the person you are going with.

Don't be late! Not only does this show lack of refinement, but it's also a tad annoying. Enough said.

Do prepare everything in advance: flowers, makeup, et al. I couldn't care less for my junior prom date so I didn't start looking for a boutonniere until three days before the prom. I managed to find one all right but not without a lot of difficulty and it was overpriced, too. I sure learned my lesson, sheesh!

Enjoy every moment even if the evening and your date didn't turn out the way you wanted

Do use your mobile phone for emergency only. Texting instead of having a conversation with your date could mean you are bored or your escort was not of your choosing. Either way, it's not a good sight.

Do socialize. Chat with your date's friends and the people in your dinner table.

Do not, at all costs, abandon your date even if your crush is alone on the dance floor. That wouldn't look good.

Do observe table manners.

Remember: 1) Unfold the table napkin.

2) Work your way from outside the table settings to inside.

3) Don't slurp the soup.

4) Twirl the pasta. This isn't Junior's birthday party, and you're not joining a spaghetti-eating contest either.

5) Slice the meat as you eat. Don't slice up the whole thing in one go. You wouldn't want your plate to look like a kid's, would you?

Do be a gentleman/lady all the time and have a great time with your date. You may not be your date's first choice, but make him/her feel that she/he did right in going out with you.

Do be confident. The prom's not about having a suit/gown by a famous designer. People aren't going to ask, "Who are you wearing?" This isn't the Oscars, so let your hair down and have fun.

Don't annoy your date, even if the evening turned out to be a dud, in the hope of making him/her decide to leave so you go home and do other stuff. She/he would only think you're being a major jerk.

For the guys

Do ask the girl nicely. Not, "Chocolates, flowers, *hatid-sundo sa bahay*. Deal?"

Do be polite to her parents, and show your finer self (that you didn't know you have.)

Do open doors and pull out chairs, even if you are a "shotgun" escort.

Do try to find a wrist corsage instead of the pin-on one. Most girls prefer the wrist corsage because the pin-on one makes them feel like matrons-in-training.

For the girls

Don't powder your nose at the dinner table! It is all right to put on lipstick or lip gloss, but do it discreetly. Do the rest in the washroom. (i.e. fix your hair, retouch makeup, et al.)

Do offer to share in paying the bill especially if you asked the guy out.

Don't stay too long in the washroom. Guys find that annoying, especially as they already feel uncomfortable about the whole prom thing. So don't be a nuisance and save the girl talk for after the prom.

And for all prom goers, **do have fun.** Enjoy every moment even if the evening and your date didn't turn out the way you wanted because once you leave high school, you'd most likely miss the prom.

E-mail the author at xlady_ivoryx@yahoo.co.uk

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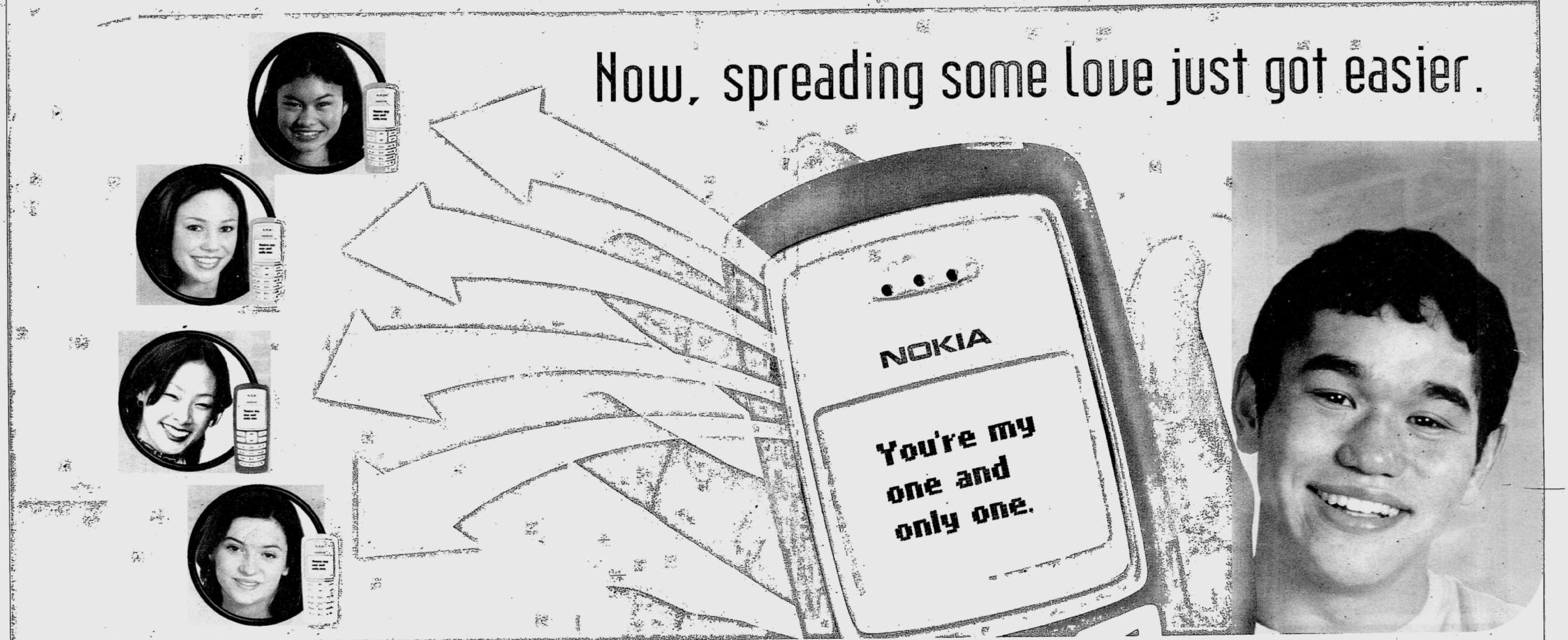
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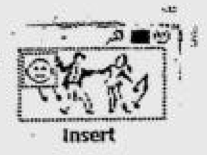

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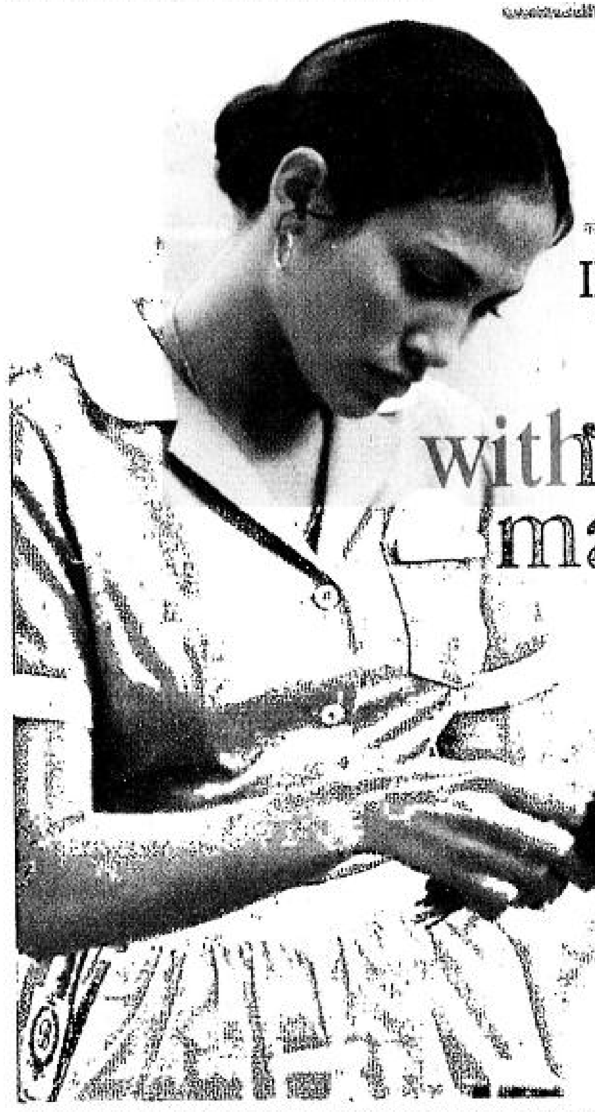
INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

J.Lo scores high with a romantic comedy made in Manhattan



JENNIFER Lopez plays Marisa Ventura in this top grosser film.

By Alexis Loinaz
Contributor

> A Latina hotel maid sweeps her prince charming off his feet in between sweeping rooms

THE STORY'S been told more often than J.Lo's been photographed: a beguiling but lowly lass dreams of a fairy-tale life; evil cohorts thwart her stab at happiness; prince charming gallops in and whisks her away.

If you think you've heard this variation of "once upon a time" one too many times—in "Cinderella," in "Pretty Woman," in every other sad-sack reality-TV show, don't bibbidi-bobbidi-boo your brains out just yet. Here comes "Maid in Manhattan," the sweet, if by-the-numbers, romantic comedy starring Jennifer Lopez and Ralph Fiennes.

The film, about a winsome but ambitious hotel maid who sweeps her prince charming off his feet in between sweeping rooms, hopes to do for Lopez what "Pretty Woman" did for Julia Roberts. And the film's producers hope their fairy-tale ending will include lots of packed theaters and ringing cash registers.

High-grosser

So far, it looks like those registers are ringing happily ever after. Since it opened in the US last December, "Maid in Manhattan" has raked in over $90 million, becoming Lopez's highest-grossing film and one of the holiday season's box-office heavy-hitters.

"I think there's a lot of things in this film that had been done before," Fiennes tells the INQUIRER in New York City, where he's promoting the movie. "I knew that when I went into it. But I liked it. It's a very charming, light story."

The acclaimed actor, who stars in his first romantic comedy and is coming off a pair of emotionally wrought performances in "Red Dragon" and "Spider," plays an aspiring senatorial candidate who checks into a New York hotel while on the campaign trail. There, he becomes smitten with Lopez's character, a good-natured Puerto Rican from the Bronx whom he accidentally mistakes for a sophisticated hotel guest.

Needless to say, the film plays out as a predictable pas de deux of mistaken identity and clashing social classes. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out how it ends.

Be invisible

Ironically, the story of how the film began is not so simple. Producer Elaine Goldsmith-Thomas, who used to be Lopez's agent, came up with the idea for a movie about a hotel maid after watching a documentary on hotel staff and their behind-the-scenes goings-on.

Goldsmith-Thomas was struck by a sign in the documentary that read: "Aspire to be invisible." "I thought, 'wow, what a weird thing,'" she says. "You spend your life trying to disappear, and that really got me thinking about a maid. I said, 'There is a movie here.'"

At the same time, a similarly themed script written by "Home Alone's" John Hughes (under the pseudonym Edmond Dantes) was floating around Hollywood. That story, however, was set in Chicago and involved a loftier, more literal Cinderella-esque plotline about a maid who falls for a British prince. Screenwriter Kevin Wade was then brought in to ground the story in a less passive, more go-getting heroine.

That role ping-ponged between several actresses. Reportedly, Julia Roberts and Hilary Swank were

J.LO/H2

JENNY from the block flaunts her rocks.

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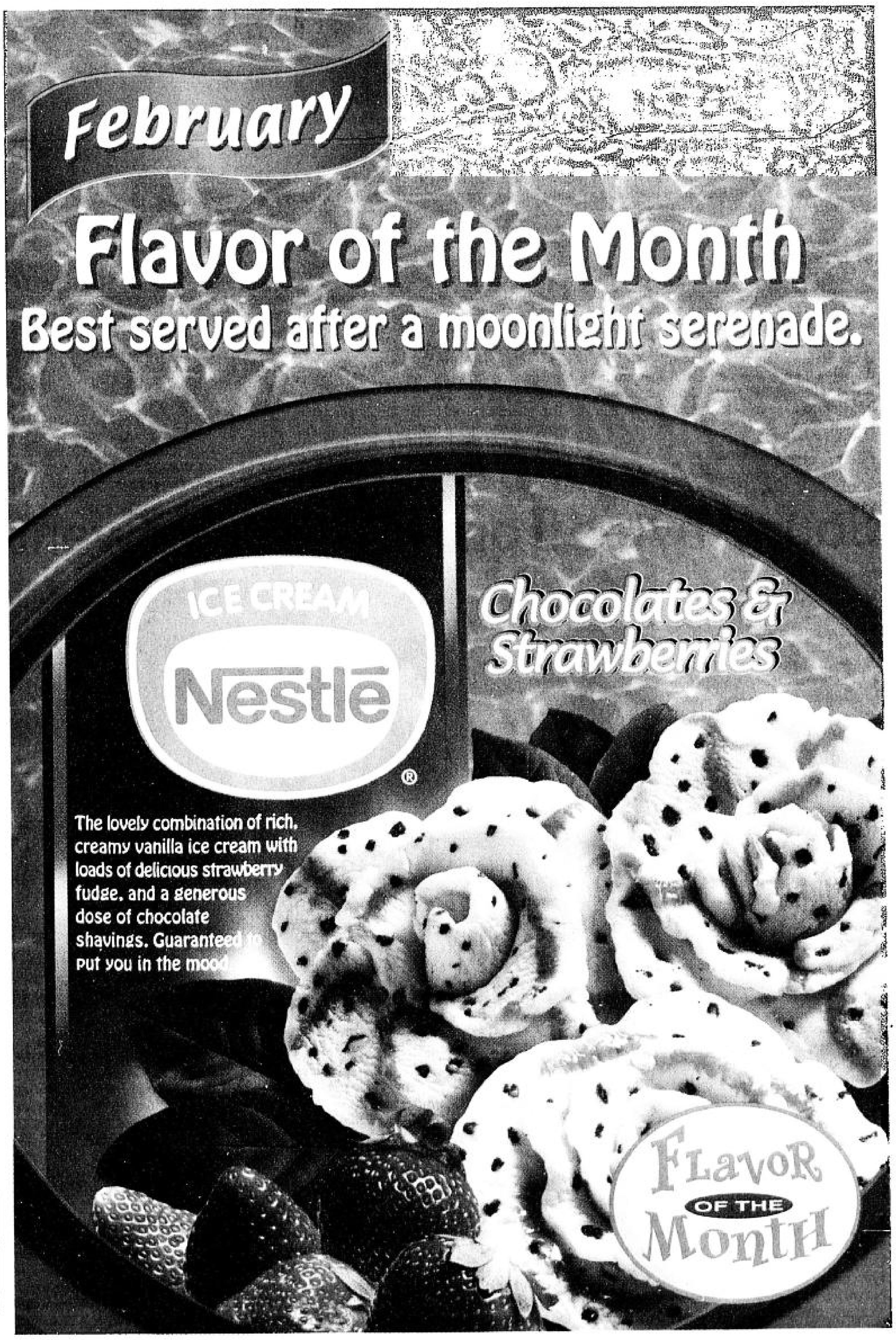
WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

TREASURE PLANET
PIRATES PARADE
It's a pirate's world at Robinsons!
Come in your best pirate costume and join the mall parade.
February 23, Sunday
Registration: 2PM Activity Proper: 3PM
Fountain Area

Buena Vista International
MELLOW TOUCH 94.7

ROBINSONS Galleria
Visit us at www.robinsonsland.com



February
Flavor of the Month
Best served after a moonlight serenade.
ICE CREAM
Nestlé
Chocolates & Strawberries
The lovely combination of rich, creamy vanilla ice cream with loads of delicious strawberry fudge, and a generous dose of chocolate shavings. Guaranteed to put you in the mood.
FLAVOR OF THE MONTH

WITH COSTAR Ralph Fiennes

THE MAID prepares to get fully made.

J.LO scores high with a romantic comedy made in Manhattan

From page H1

offered the part, as was Sandra Bullock. "As far as I know, Sandy [was] offered the part in that movie and turned it down," says Marc Lawrence, who, ironically, directed Bullock in "Two Weeks Notice," the main holiday box-office rival of "Maid in Manhattan's." He adds: "I honestly don't know anything beyond that. But I know that to be the case."

Outlines of dreams

Enter Lopez, who was conveniently staying at Goldsmith-Thomas' house at the time the film was being developed. After the actress accepted the role, the film's ethnic angle clicked into place.

"She suggested [we] move it from Chicago to New York," Goldsmith-Thomas says. "She talked to me about what it was like to grow up in the Bronx, to look at the city every day from the rooftop of your building and see the outlines of your dreams."

If all this ruminating sounds a bit familiar—and a bit too publicity-savvy—well, the filmmakers don't want you to overlook how closely this resembles Lopez's life story. The actress, who grew up in the Castle Hill section of the Bronx and whose working-class parents emigrated from Puerto Rico, used to trek into Manhattan to take dance lessons, hoping they would be her ticket into show business. (She later named her debut album, "On the 6," after the train she used to ride into the city.)

Lopez speaks matter-of-factly about her heritage and how it permeates the film. "I'm Puerto Rican. You ask me what I am, that's what I am," she tells the INQUIRER after a screening of the movie in New York City. "This is my identity. I'm very proud of it—I don't think there's any question about that, in the way that I conduct myself and portray myself. It manifests itself in everything I do, whether it's music or movies."

Highest paid Latina

While Lopez, who commands $12 million per picture and is the highest-paid Latina in the business, identifies strongly with the character, she says she never aspired to live an old-school fairy tale: "I don't see myself as Cinderella—some guy rescuing you or anything like that—as much as a working girl, where I had to work to achieve what I wanted to do."

J.LO and Ben Affleck at the movie's premiere night.

"She had good ideas because she knew the background of this woman," says screenwriter Wade. According to him, Lopez provided key insight into the dynamics of a typical working-class Latino family. "That became part of this movie through Jennifer saying, 'I think this would be an authentic area to explore as we tell this story.'"

For others involved in the film, Lopez's star power was enough to make them sign on the dotted line and commit to the movie. Director Wayne Wang ("The Joy Luck Club," "Anywhere But Here") says amusedly, "My father, who's 80-something, said, 'You have to direct this because it's Jennifer Lopez.'"

Veteran character actor Bob Hoskins, who plays a kindhearted butler in the film but didn't know much about Lopez beforehand, took a cue from his enthusiastic son. "He said, 'You're working with J.Lo?'" Hoskins recalls. " 'No, Jennifer Lopez.' I didn't really know that much about her."

Well-publicized romance

No doubt, Hoskins knows much more about Lopez now, including her well-publicized personal life. While Lopez's quasi-biographical Latina-from-the-Bronx success story was the film's initial selling point, her explosive, made-in-tabloid heaven affair with Ben Affleck shot its profile through the roof.

The two reportedly met last year while making "Gigli," a crime comedy that will be released in the US this summer; it's the first of two movies they headline together. ("Jersey Girl," the family drama in which they play—wink, wink—a married couple, is slated for later in the year.)

Toward the end of the "Maid in Manhattan" shoot last July, Affleck would sneak onto the set, dodging the paparazzi but dangling enough tabloid bait to fuel rumors of a romance. The actor even joined well-wishers on location at the Metropolitan Museum of Art to greet Lopez a happy birthday.

Actors and crew members recall seeing Affleck hanging around, but they say nobody—least of all Lopez—let any of the Bennifer brouhaha affect their work. "I only saw him at the end very briefly," Wang remembers. "If he was there, he was very quiet and very unassuming. Jennifer's very professional. I'm very professional. We just go and do the work and never deal with the personal stuff."

"Yesterday, I [was asked], 'What do you think of Ben Affleck?'" says Hoskins. "I said, He's not in the film. We never talked about anything like that. We just got on with the work. That's what we're interested in: doing our job."

Those involved in "Maid in Manhattan" believe that if they've done their job right, the film should sail on its own merits and not on the J.Lo feeding frenzy that threatens to overshadow it.

"It's simply about the audience being charmed into watching," says Fiennes. "The audience has to project themselves onto these characters. It's all in moments of eye contact, it's all in little throwaway lines. And to make that work on screen, I think, is quite a challenge."

"I DON'T see myself as Cinderella—some guy rescuing you or anything like that."

Sound bytes from Matchbox Twenty

From page H4

be saying the same thing. We'd be, like, what were we thinking, that was terrible, this is the good record. Our goal is that we want to become better musicians constantly. We want to become better songwriters. We want every record to be better than the last one. Not necessarily better like sell a lot more. We want to like it better. We're the harshest critics on ourselves. We can pick apart any little thing. I think the goal that we all have is to finally make a record where we're like, you know what, this is really good. And we get closer every time."

... on giving songs away

"Rob and Mick Jagger had gotten together to write for Mick's last solo record and the night before, Rob wrote a song that he thought Mick Jagger would sound good singing. So he wrote most of 'Disease' and the next day they got together and Mick added a couple of lines to the second verse. Then a couple of months later, Mick came to see us in London. We were playing and he came to the show and was, like, 'You know what, my record's almost done and 'Disease' just really doesn't fit in with everything so you guys should do it.' And we were, like, great. Rob played me the song before Mick said he wasn't going to use it. He was, like, this is the song I just gave Mick Jagger. I was, like, why would you give that song away? Your priority should the band. But we got it back."

MATCHBOX Twenty at the Grand Copthorne Hotel in Singapore

... on always doing something new

"I get bored really easily. So I always want to try something different. It doesn't matter what it is. Once you've done something a certain way, you've already done it that way. Why do it again?"

... on taking time off

"After we're done with this record, we're all gonna split off for a little bit. Rob's gonna do a record, I'm gonna do a record, Kyle has this band that he has on the side that he's gonna do a record with. We've all allowed ourselves solo time before we get back together and make a record again."

... on being a celebrity

"The whole press and celebrity thing, it's part of the job and we understand that, but it's not why we do it. It's not why I do it. If you really break it down, it's kinda stupid. We're just guys in a band. We're glad you like the music and we're more than happy to talk to people about the making of the record but it really stops there."

... on their clean image

"We had our time when we were kind of a hell raiser but no one knew who we were at that time so no one talked about it. And by the time people knew who we were, we were all married. I'm married now. It's just boring. You're gonna wreck a hotel room, now you've got to sit in a hotel room that's wrecked and you've got to pay for it. That's just stupid. Throw the TV out the window, now you can't watch 'The Simpsons.'"

... the best thing about being in Matchbox Twenty

"We all get to do what we love to do for a living. I don't have to worry about how I'm going to pay my electric bill. That's a wonderful thing. To be able to be a musician and not have that. It's a wonderful, wonderful thing. I can strictly concentrate on music."

... on art

"If I weren't in music, I'd be into photography. I wouldn't mind directing. I dabble in a lot of stuff. Art is a passion."

... on the worst movie ever made

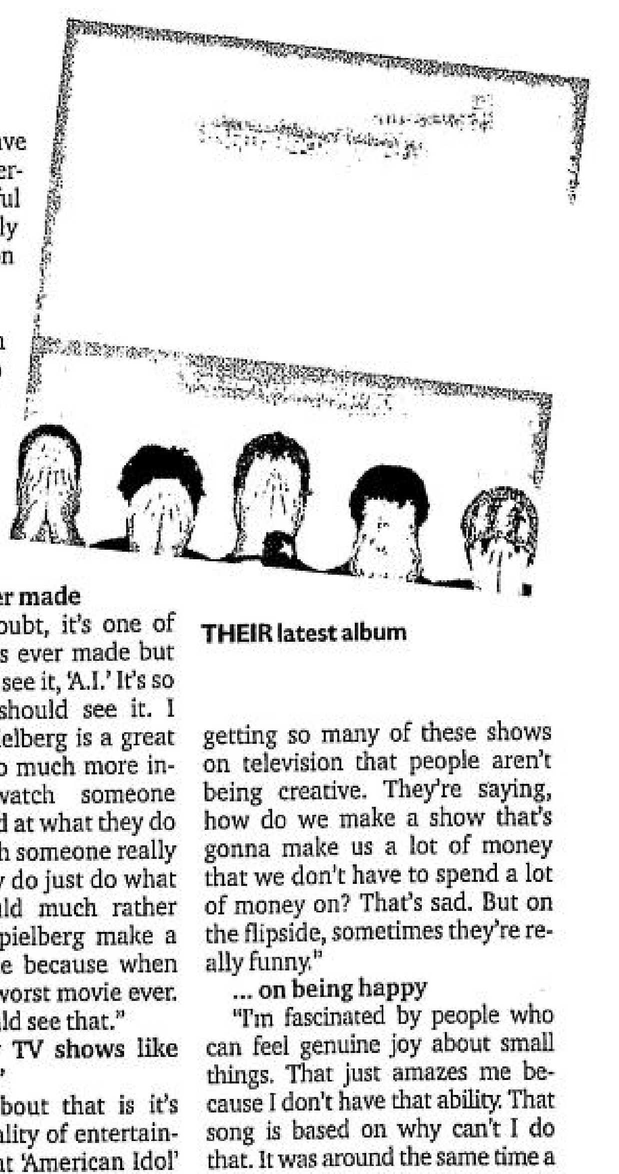
"Without a doubt, it's one of the worst movies ever made but everyone should see it, 'A.I.' It's so bad. Everyone should see it. I think Steven Spielberg is a great filmmaker. It's so much more interesting to watch someone who's really good at what they do fail than to watch someone really bad at what they do just do what they do. I would much rather watch Steven Spielberg make a really bad movie because when he does it's the worst movie ever. And people should see that."

... on reality TV shows like "American Idol"

"My worry about that is it's bringing the quality of entertainment down. That 'American Idol' person, yes, maybe they can sing, maybe they can perform, but the money that's gonna go to promote that record is now not going to a band that writes their own songs and that can further pop culture. You need to develop a band. I think that's wrong. You're getting so many of these shows on television that people aren't being creative. They're saying, how do we make a show that's gonna make us a lot of money that we don't have to spend a lot of money on? That's sad. But on the flipside, sometimes they're really funny."

... on being happy

"I'm fascinated by people who can feel genuine joy about small things. That just amazes me because I don't have that ability. That song is based on why can't I do that. It was around the same time a lot of really positive things were happening to the band and I wasn't really all that excited about it. I didn't really understand why. But yeah, I'm much happier now."

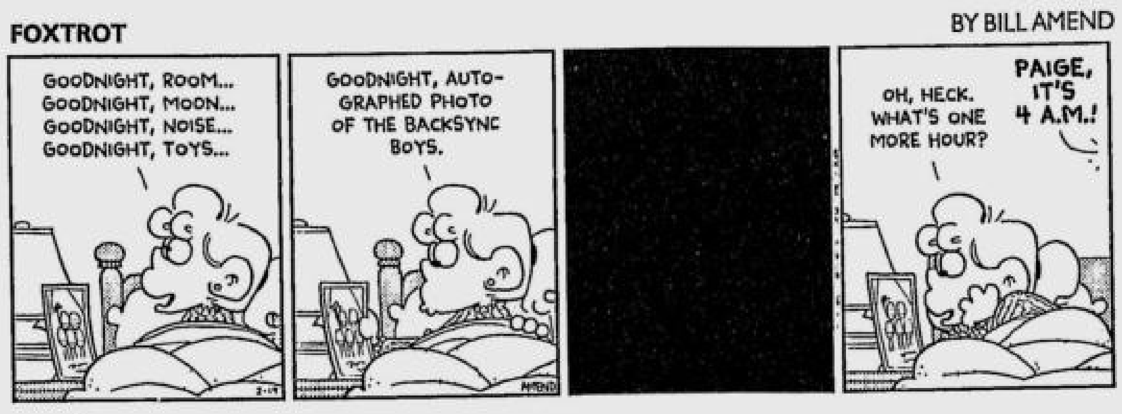


THEIR latest album

Thanks to Warner Music Philippines

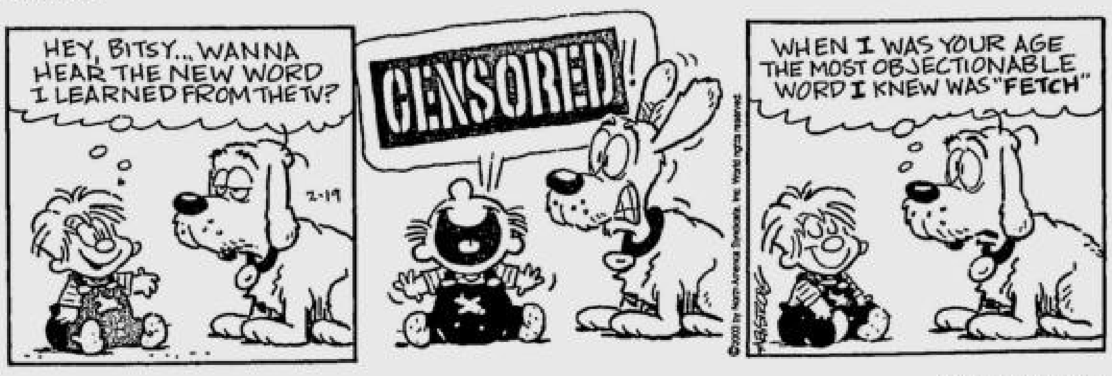
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


GOODNIGHT, ROOM... GOODNIGHT, MOON... GOODNIGHT, NOISE... GOODNIGHT, TOYS...
GOODNIGHT, AUTO-GRAPHED PHOTO OF THE BACKSYNC BOYS.
OH, HECK. WHAT'S ONE MORE HOUR?
PAIGE, IT'S 4 A.M.!
2-19
AMEND

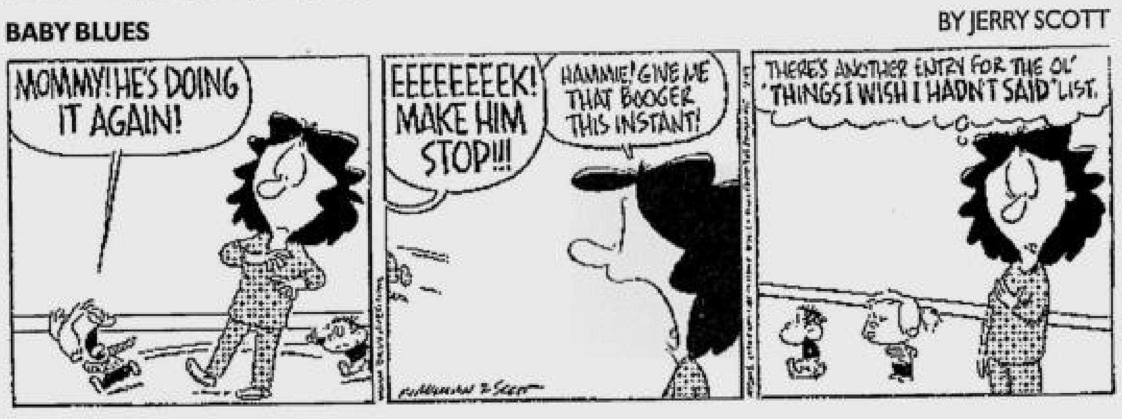
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


HEY, BITSY... WANNA HEAR THE NEW WORD I LEARNED FROM THE TV?
2-19
CENSORED
WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE THE MOST OBJECTIONABLE WORD I KNEW WAS "FETCH"
ARMSTRONG

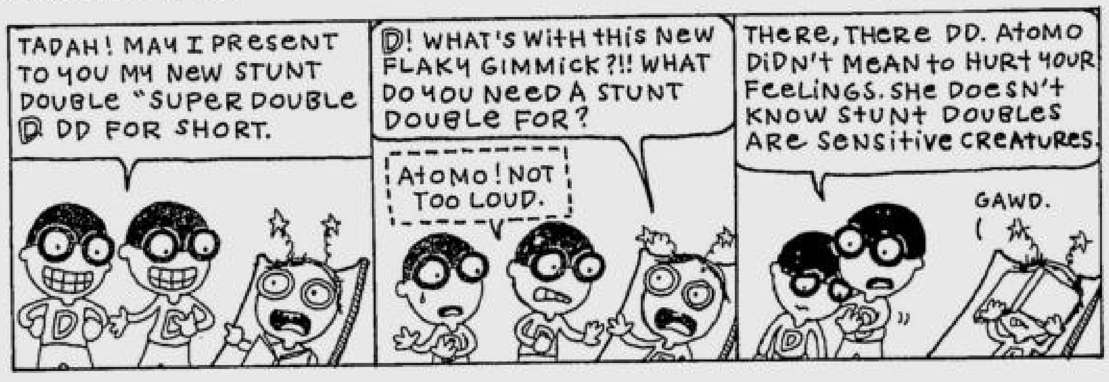
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MOMMY! HE'S DOING IT AGAIN!
EEEEEEEEK! MAKE HIM STOP!!!
HAMMIE! GIVE ME THAT BOOGER THIS INSTANT!
THERE'S ANOTHER ENTRY FOR THE OL' "THINGS I WISH I HADN'T SAID" LIST.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BYLYRA GARCELLANO


TADAH! MAY I PRESENT TO YOU MY NEW STUNT DOUBLE "SUPER DOUBLE D" DD FOR SHORT.
D! WHAT'S WITH THIS NEW FLAKY GIMMICK?!! WHAT DO YOU NEED A STUNT DOUBLE FOR?
ATOMO! NOT TOO LOUD.
THERE, THERE DD. ATOMO DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOUR FEELINGS. SHE DOESN'T KNOW STUNT DOUBLES ARE SENSITIVE CREATURES.
GAWD.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are receptive and perceptive. You have a vivid memory and a keen imagination. You can easily repeat what you have learned. You insist on being taken seriously. Nevertheless, you are cooperative and caring, and you work well with others. In the year ahead, you will wrap up many things you have been involved with for the past decade.

Birthdate of: Ansel Adams, photographer; Charles Barkley, athlete; Lili Taylor, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Be patient in your dealings with everyone. It's easy to feel irritated while driving, talking, walking and shopping. But the irritation is within you, not outside.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Plans to spend money are blocked by credit limitations and the efforts of others. This is a poor day to ask for a loan or apply for a mortgage.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): It's easy to be irritated with the actions of others today. You might find yourself doing a "slow burn" because to speak up would seem inappropriate. Count one to three.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might feel that others are unfair or taking advantage of you today. Nevertheless, this is not the day to complain. Wait until the time is right.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Feelings of irritation with friends (and children) are frustrating. Ironically, there is no point in talking this over with partners, because this too is an area of confusion.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a very poor day to take on any authority figure. If you do, something will happen that makes you incapable of really speaking out. You'll feel muzzled. Just try to avoid it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You like to be surrounded by peace and harmony. Instead, you might feel stressed because practically everyone is easily irritated and looking for a fight. Keep a low profile.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your efforts to shop or purchase something significant are blocked for a number of reasons. Naturally, you aren't pleased. However, don't fight the system, not today.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is the classic day for disagreements with partners and close friends. But because of confusion, little will be gained if you try to speak out. Best to keep your thoughts to yourself.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Do not be judgmental about co-workers today. Confusion, deceit, doubt and paralysis cause many people to make an error in judgment. Be tolerant.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Don't speak out if a friend irritates you today. This individual might be equally irritated with you! Many difficult astrological aspects are taking place today. Have patience.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Avoid important discussions with bosses, parents and authority figures. Nothing will be gained, and much could be lost. Act in such a way that you will have no regrets later.

DAILY CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	■	6	7	8	9	■	10	11	12	13
14					■	15				■	16			
17					18					19				
20									■	21				
■	■	■	■	■	22			■	23					
24	25	26	27	28				29				■	■	■
30					■	■	31			■	■	32	33	34
35					36	37	■	38		39	40			
41			■	■	42		43	■	■	44				
■	■	■	45	46				47	48					
49	50	51				■	52			■	■	■	■	■
53					■	54				55	56	57	58	59
60					61									
62				■	63				■	64				
65				■	66				■	67				

By John Underwood
New York, NY
2/20/03

ACROSS
1 Build up
6 Desert lily
10 Sarazen of golf
14 Secret plotters
15 Enthusiastic
16 Golden calf, e.g.
17 2001 L.A. film route
20 Alpine flower
21 Dog-collar attachment
22 Fauna starter?
23 Grammer of "Frasier"
24 1950 Chicago film route
30 Revere
31 Whitney or Wallach
32 Rabble
35 Rainy-day cache
38 Start of a plan
41 USNA grad
42 Big letters in Detroit
44 Pizza topping
45 1975 New York City film route
49 Dense volcanic rock
52 Sandra of Hollywood
53 Grace enders
54 Italian auto maker
60 1950 L.A. film route
62 Exxon, once
63 Rudiments
64 Sao __
65 Judge
66 Small boy
67 Craftier

DOWN
1 High point
2 Queen __ Land, Antarctica
3 Ready and willing partner
4 Satirist Mort
5 Unhurried
6 Mouth moistener
7 Slippery
8 Wins at rummy
9 Roulette bet
10 Elasticized undergarment
11 Redacts
12 Exploding stars
13 Threnody
18 Reuben's mother
19 God in Grenoble
23 Contract in wrinkles
24 Subside
25 Arabian gulf
26 Gang leader
27 Cultural expression
28 Visualize
29 Ernie of the links
32 Pouting grimace
33 As soon as
34 Borscht ingredient
36 Sudden burst
37 Heater
39 Erhard's group
40 Pebble Beach standard
43 Matrimony
45 Horse-drawn cab
46 Choice word
47 Decline
48 Close tightly
49 Stationed
50 Entertain
51 Meaning
54 Dear advice columnist
55 Workout figs.
56 Elliptical
57 Lanai neighbor
58 Agatha's contemporary
59 Stench
61 Create lace

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

F	E	E	S	■	B	E	A	R	■	O	G	L	E	D
R	E	N	T	■	U	L	N	A	■	S	U	A	V	E
A	R	I	A	■	R	A	T	S	■	A	R	D	E	N
M	I	S	T	E	R	N	I	C	E	G	U	Y	■	■
E	L	L	E	N	■	■	■	A	Y	E	■	L	A	P
D	Y	E	■	C	A	N	D	L	E	■	P	I	P	E
■	■	■	R	O	M	E	O	■	■	P	O	K	E	R
■	G	O	O	D	Y	T	W	O	S	H	O	E	S	■
M	O	V	I	E	■	■	S	A	P	O	R	■	■	■
A	B	E	L	■	P	R	E	F	A	B	■	G	A	B
S	I	R	■	T	E	A	■	■	■	I	T	A	L	Y
■	■	S	T	R	A	I	G	H	T	A	R	R	O	W
A	D	I	E	U	■	S	O	A	R	■	A	G	H	A
D	O	Z	E	S	■	I	N	T	O	■	C	L	A	Y
S	C	E	N	T	■	N	E	E	D	■	T	E	S	S

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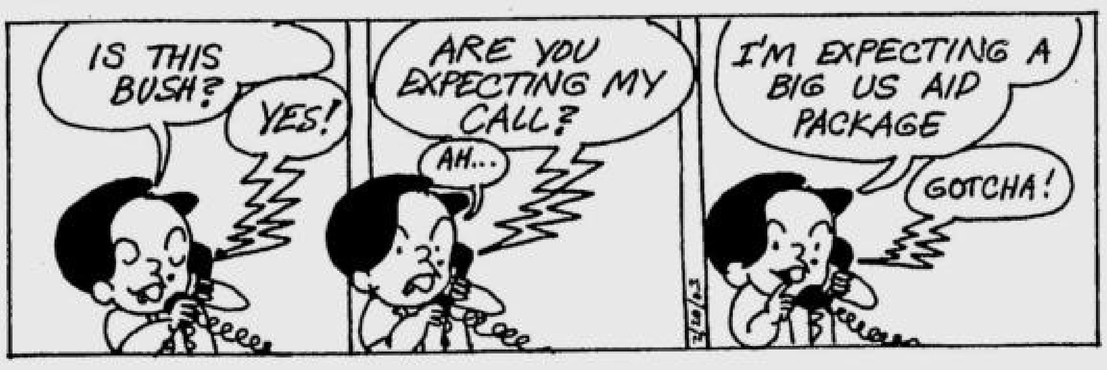
2/20/03

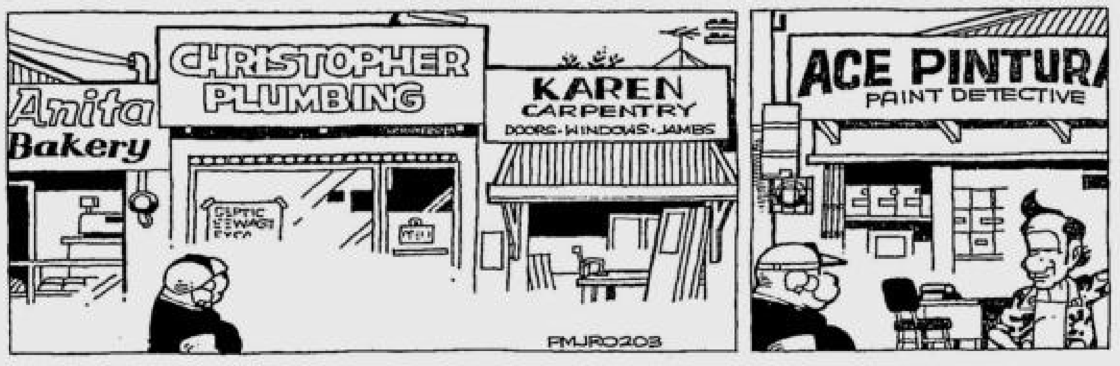
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


IS THIS BUSH?
YES!
ARE YOU EXPECTING MY CALL?
AH...
I'M EXPECTING A BIG US AID PACKAGE
GOTCHA!

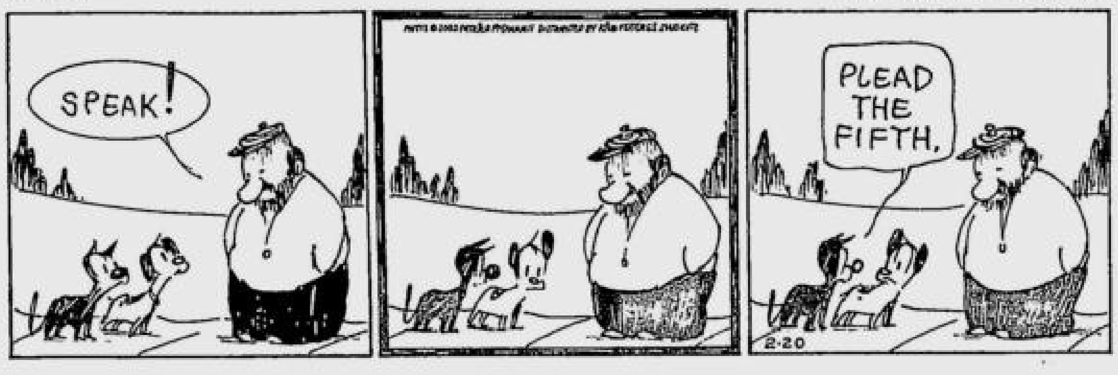
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


Anita Bakery
CHRISTOPHER PLUMBING
KAREN CARPENTRY
DOORS-WINDOWS-JAMBS
ACE PINTURA
PAINT DETECTIVE
PMJR0203

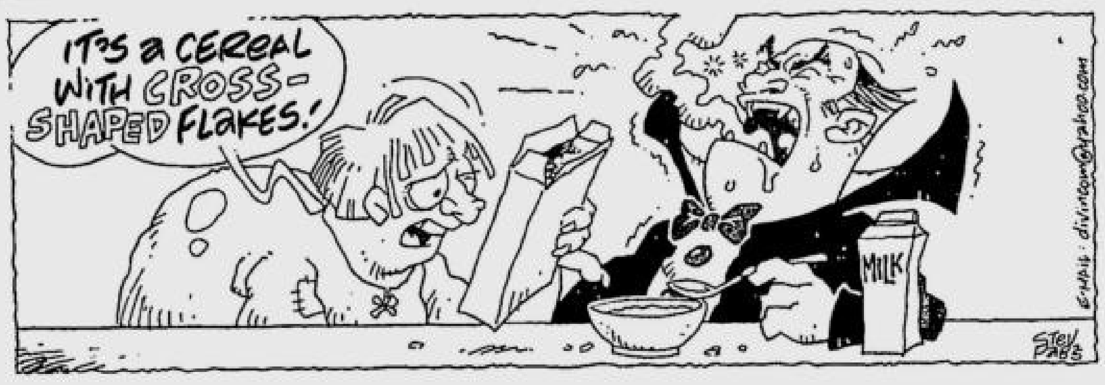
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SPEAK!
PLEAD THE FIFTH.
2-20

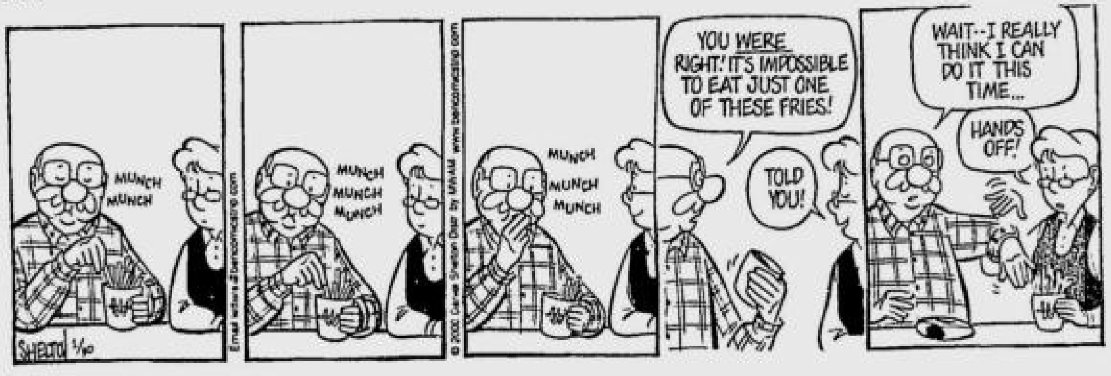
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


IT'S A CEREAL WITH CROSS-SHAPED FLAKES!
MILK
STEV PABS

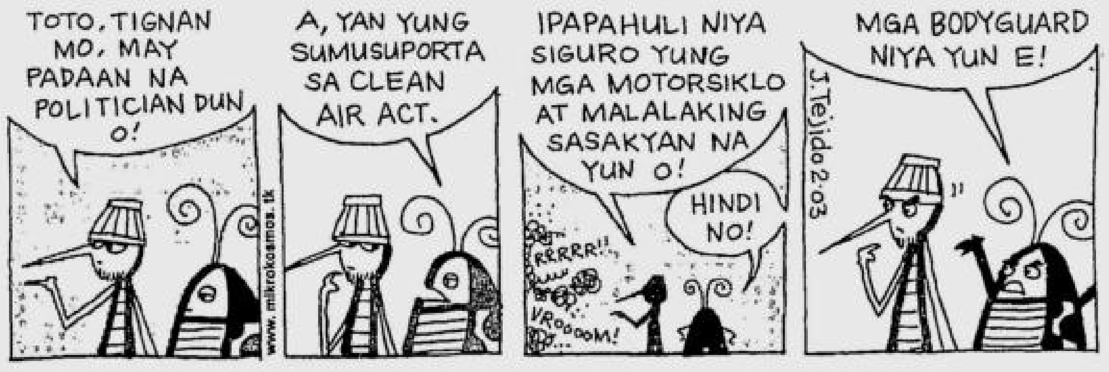
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MUNCH MUNCH
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH
YOU WERE RIGHT! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO EAT JUST ONE OF THESE FRIES!
TOLD YOU!
WAIT--I REALLY THINK I CAN DO IT THIS TIME...
HANDS OFF!
SHELTON

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


TOTO, TIGNAN MO, MAY PADAAN NA POLITICIAN DUN O!
A, YAN YUNG SUMUSUPORTA SA CLEAN AIR ACT.
IPAPAHULI NIYA SIGURO YUNG MGA MOTORSIKLO AT MALALAKING SASAKYAN NA YUN O!
HINDI NO!
RRRRR!!
VROoooM!
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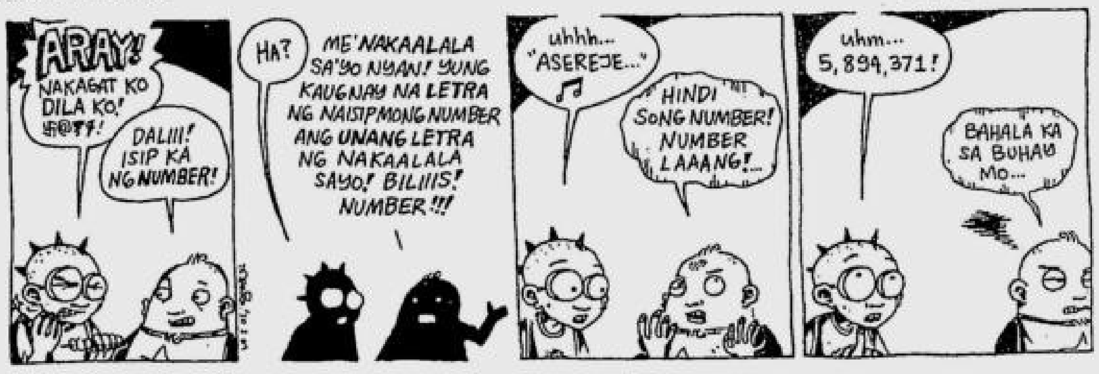
J.Tejido 2.03

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA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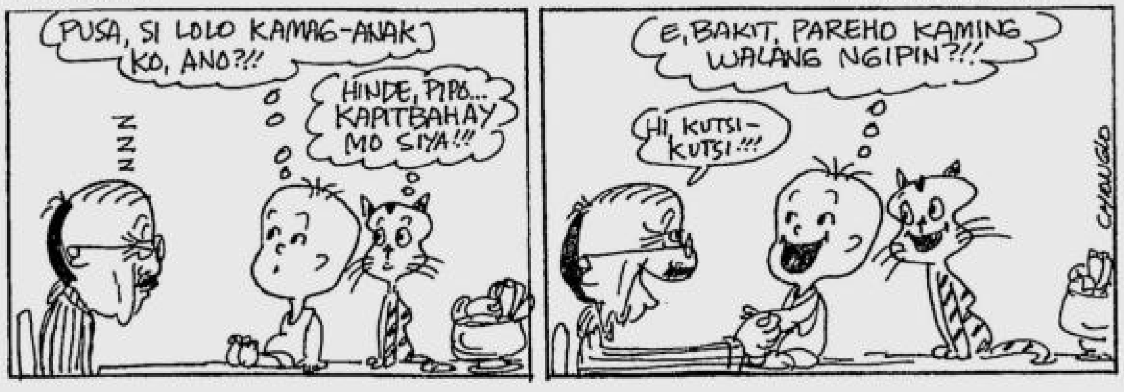
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO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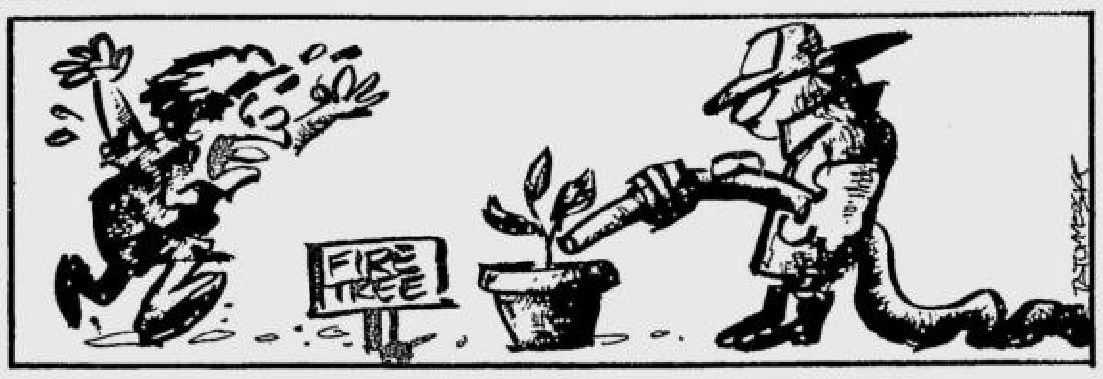
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2BU! EXCLUSIVE

Sound bytes from Matchbox Twenty

Text and photos By Pam Pastor

Drummer Paul Doucette speaks candidly about everything—from his band members and bad movies to his passion for art and being happy

"DO you want anything?" he asked as he stood up to get coffee, like any of your friends would when you'd hang out at Starbucks. But you're nowhere near Starbucks. You are in the Sharma room of Singapore's Grand Copthorne Hotel and the guy who just spoke is Paul Doucette, the drummer and percussionist of Matchbox Twenty.

The other members of the band—Rob Thomas (vocals, piano, acoustic guitar), Kyle Cook (lead guitar, vocals), Adam Gaynor (rhythm guitar, vocals) and Brian Yale (bass)—are in the other rooms, facing other journalists from the Asia-Pacific region.

Paul, with his printed shirt, tie and baseball cap combo succeeded in his anti-prep, sporty-grunge statement, if that really was one. He sat comfortably in the chair in front of you, his face a picture of relaxation. He remained at ease all throughout the conversation. He was candid and honest, you discovered with joy. When the interview was over, he said, "Thank you. That was easy and painless." Just like it was for you.

This is Paul…

… on Rob

"Musically he's the main songwriter in the band, he brings bulk of the material. He and I have been best friends for about 10 years. Just a hell of a nice guy. Very fidgety though. Very annoying to sit next to on a plane."

… on Kyle

"Kyle is probably the best all-around musician in the band. He plays piano, he plays guitar, obviously. He's kind of like our secret weapon. He's just a bad-ass guitar player. He's really, really great. He's better at playing guitar than any of us are (on our own instruments). He's just kind of on a different level. He's real quiet but when he says something it's really funny. He'll never say anything and then all of a sudden you'd just hear this voice from the back. It's hysterical."

… on Brian

"Brian is a really great musician, a really solid bass player. But that's it. He wants nothing else. He's like, "I play bass. When I'm not playing bass, I play golf. That's it, that's what I want in life and I'm fine with that."

… on Adam

"Adam is (pauses) the entertainment factor, I guess. He's the one who makes the most jokes. He's a joker kind of guy. Very up, restless. If they don't get to spend a lot of time with him, people seem to really like him."

… on himself

"Me, musically, I write as well for the band. I play a couple of different instruments, especially in the last record. I'm generally the one who has the loudest opinion. I tend to handle most of our stuff."

… on getting annoyed with the other members of his band

"It switches off. One day it will be Adam, the next day it will be Kyle. Everyone gets his turn. We've been together 10 years. I've spent so much time with these guys, it's like family. Eventually, they're just gonna get on your nerves. Then you'd be, like, just get away from me."

… on their recently released album, "More Than You Think You Are"

"Our records in the past had a glossed-over [sound], really produced, like you could really hear the studio. In this record, we wanted to take all that away. We just wanted a piano to sound like a piano and an electric guitar to sound like an electric guitar. We wanted the performances to feel like you were sitting in a room, listening to a band play instead of you know, people overdubbing. We tried to get as much of a live feel as possible on it. Just make it simple. With the last record 'Mad Season' we had orchestras. Most of the songs on the record had an orchestra on it. We just went overboard. And we're like, you know what, let's just go on and make a record that's just a band, playing live."

… on his favorite song in the album

"It changes all the time. Now, there's two moments on the record that I really, really love. And I think it's two of the best moments ever put on a record. One is in a song called 'Hand Me Down.' Kyle has a solo at the end of the song, which I think is just a beautiful beautiful solo. And I think it's the best moment in a Matchbox Twenty record without a doubt. Second, there's a song called 'Soul.' I really like it."

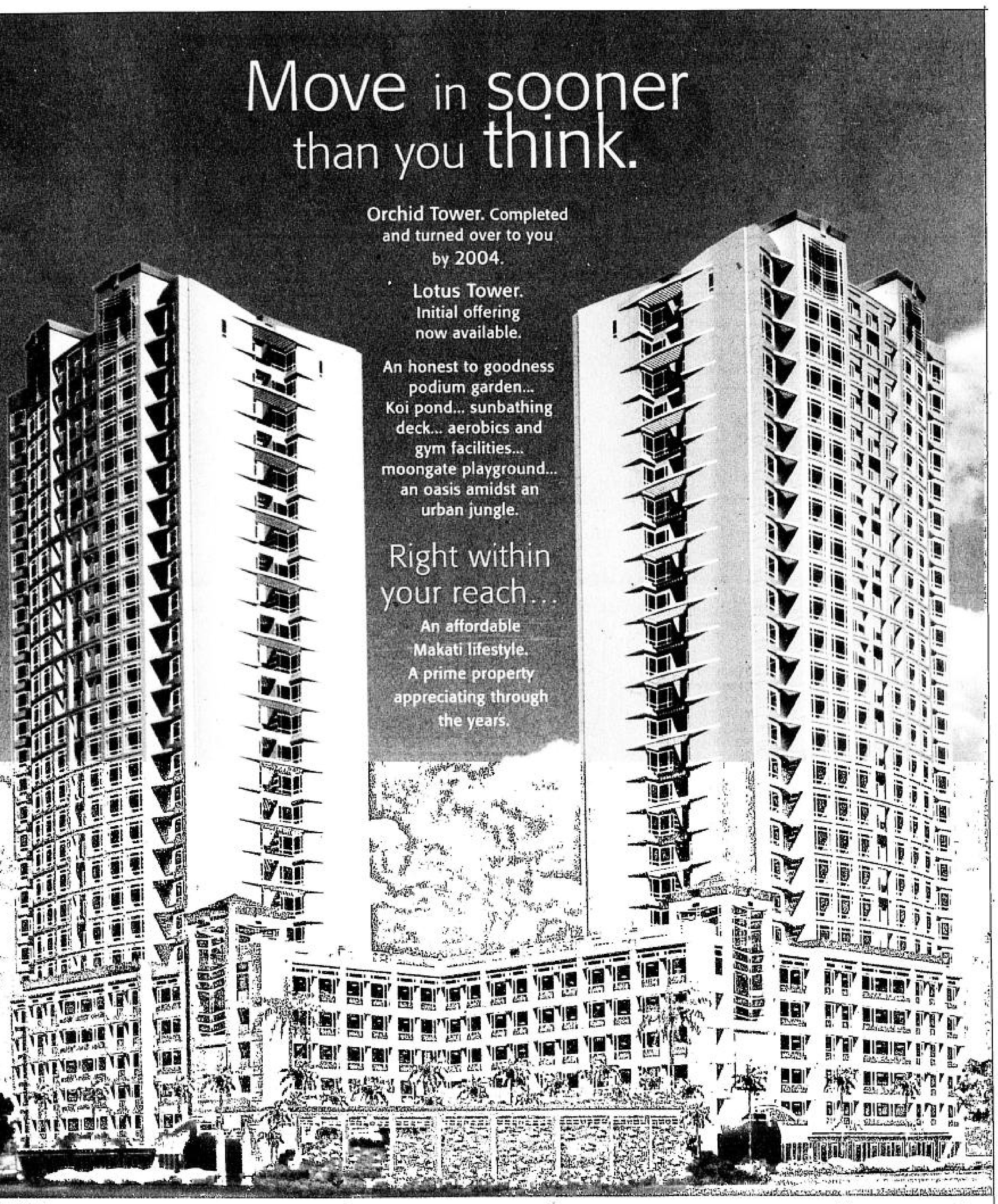
… on knowing when a song is good

"You don't. You have to get a good feeling out of it. Sometimes you'll play something when you're writing it and you'd be, like, that just drained me to sing it. That was just not fun. That wasn't a good experience. It's not pleasant to listen to. A lot of times I'd put those songs away—they need a lot more work. Sometimes you just get this feeling, wow, I really like that. And hopefully, you play it for the guys in your band and they'd say, hey, I really like that, too. We walk into a studio with a lot of material and a lot of bits of songs and little ideas that we kind of bounce off each other. And a lot of it doesn't make it. If we all like the song, it goes on the record and hopefully other people will like it."

… on becoming better

"Every time we finish a record, we're always, like, 'This is the best record, we've finally figured out what we do.' And we look back at the other records and, yeah, we made mistakes in those records but this record, this is the one. So hopefully, in the next record, we'd

SOUND/H2



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